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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 17th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 29 September 1992, at 3 p.m.

President:	Mr. GANEV	(Bulgaria)
later:	Mr. AL-HADDAD (Vice-President)	(Yemen)
later:	Mr. GANEV (President)	(Bulgaria)
later:	Mr. ABULHASAN (Vice-President)	(Kuwait)
later:	Mr. HOLO (Vice-President)	(Benin)

- Address by Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of the Republic of Haiti

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- General debate [9] (continued)

Statements made by

Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh)
Mr. Manitski (Estonia)
Prince Saud Al-Faisal (Saudi Arabia)
Mr. Frutos Vaesken (Paraguay)
Mr. Natchaba (Togo)
Mr. Menendez Park (Guatemala)
Mr. Sey (Gambia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

ADDRESS BY FATHER JEAN-BERTRAND ARISTIDE, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF HAITI

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Haiti.

Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of the Republic of Haiti, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Haiti, His Excellency the Reverend Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President ARISTIDE (interpretation from French): In the name of the people of Haiti, I am happy to greet you, Sir, and offer you our warm congratulations on your election to the presidency of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

I am equally pleased to salute your predecessor, Mr. Samir Shihabi, and the new Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to whom I extend my most sincere congratulations on his assumption of his position of weighty responsibility.

(President Aristide)

How happy I am to greet you and to welcome the sisterly nations that have just arrived in this great family of ours!

As always, the Haitian people cannot refrain from sending special greetings to President Carlos Andres Perez and the Venezuelan people.

On the threshold of the third millennium, the clear signals of political pollution invite us all to dialogue in order progressively to bring about a civilization founded on peace.

The end of the cold war has offered the world new prospects of peace and cooperation. Nevertheless, hotbeds of tension and the outbreak of new regional conflicts have darkened the picture of international relations. Political pollution at a global level has produced armed conflicts, wars, massacres and coups d'état against democracy. Therefore, in all humility we would like to share with you eight democratic beatitudes for a civilization of peace.

The first democratic beatitude: Blessed are those who defend democracy; may peace prevail among them. The condemnation of the coup d'état of 30 September 1991 is an expression of the desire of the United Nations to defend the democratic principles and rights of the Haitian people, and we would like to thank you warmly for that.

The advent of this civilization of peace, on a global level, necessarily involves restoring constitutional order to Haiti, where blood is flowing, corpses are piling up and repression is intensifying.

A coup d'état in itself is a crime against humankind. These 12 months are symbolic of a double crime against humankind. May the door allowing for a return finally be opened so that peace can once more shine among us.

(President Aristide)

(spoke in Creole*)

(continued in French)

Five days before the coup d'état of 30 September 1991, here, at the United Nations forum, the people of Haiti cried out: "Democracy or death!"

Today, on behalf of the 3,000 people assassinated by the enemies of democracy, the Haitian people cries out, with the same conviction and from the same rostrum, the same cry: "Democracy or death!" Anyone desirous of peace must defend democracy.

(spoke in Creole*)

(continued in French)

May peace return to Haiti!

And may peace, likewise, be restored to Yugoslavia and Somalia. The Republic of Haiti condemns the acts of terrorism and genocide that have brought about such a paroxysm of horrific deeds. We appeal to the international community to make itself responsible for progressively creating a civilization of peace.

Second democratic beatitude: Blessed are those who promote economic growth, because peace and economic poverty are incompatible.

(spoke in Creole*)

(continued in French)

Since the Second World War, global production fell for the first time, by 0.5 per cent last year. In developing countries, economic and social

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* The representative did not provide for interpretation into one of the languages of the General Assembly as required by rule 53 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

(President Aristide)

conditions have deteriorated dramatically. Hence subhuman poverty, drug abuse and an increase in crime.

Twenty per cent of the wealthiest people in the world have 83 per cent of the world's income, while 20 per cent of the poorest people in the world have only 1.4 per cent of world income. Today, 1.2 billion poor people live in the developing countries; in the year 2000, they will number 1.3 billion, and in the year 2025, 1.5 billion.

But the fundamental principle of international public law is the principle of equality. In this context, Aristotle reminds us that politics requires a reciprocal and symmetrical relationship in which citizens are placed on an equal footing with each other and not above or below each other.

(spoke in Creole*)

(continued in French)

Likewise, in his work entitled Political Justice, Hoffe, while occupying the Chair of ethics and political philosophy, has reminded us that "on the whole, Plato and Aristotle offered us a florilegium of reasons to demonstrate that life in common is profitable to all those participating in it".

Relationships, therefore, are ruled by laws: laws that must be respected, laws that must not be transgressed, laws in a society of law. Justice must be, as it were, the oxygen of the economy.

How can we bring about a civilization of peace unless there is human and economic growth at the world level?

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(President Aristide)

It is in this world where, unfortunately, every year almost 3 million children die from vaccine-preventable illnesses. One out of three children suffers from serious malnutrition. Why so much suffering? Must suffering and opulence be necessarily at daggers drawn?

The South accounts for 77 per cent of the world's population, but has only 15 per cent of the world's earnings. In Latin America, 17 per cent of landowners control 90 per cent of the land.

How can one speak of peace when equal civil rights become socio-economic inequality? That is a bitter contrast; that is a startling contradiction, owing to violations of human rights.

(President Aristide)

In our country - Haiti - it is even worse. The exploitive structures that we inherited must be democratically transformed into structures made up of participation and justice - participation by everyone; justice for all; and transparency in all matters.

Hence, we will no longer be burdened by this colonial heritage that is so clearly reflected by the following statistics:

Over 45 per cent of the national revenue is in the hands of 1 per cent of the population; there are 1.8 doctors for each 10,000 inhabitants; there are 1.9 nurses for each 10,000 inhabitants; in our 56 so-called hospitals, there are but 1.5 beds for each 1,000 sick persons; 59 per cent of urban dwellers and 3 per cent of rural dwellers have access to drinking water; 85 per cent of the population is illiterate, yet extremely intelligent. "Illiterate" does not mean "stupid".

Incumbent on us is the great responsibility to promote productive gainful employment. We will manage to do so by applying judicious macroeconomic policies and effective mesoeconomic measures.

Therefore, as always, we will have to locate the human individual in the very heart of development, enable the market to function properly, remedy any defects, introduce material infrastructures, support activities of public interest, develop harmonious relations with the private sector and struggle against corrupt structures.

The constitutional process will safeguard participation for all and justice for all. Unity in diversity is indeed the very outline of a political topology in which differences of view can be democratically harmonized.

The more equality there is in civil rights, the less inequality there will be in the socio-economic field. I repeat: the more equality there is in civil rights, the less inequality there will be in the socio-economic sphere.

(President Aristide)

(spoke in Creole*)

(continued in French)

The Republic of Haiti shares the suffering of those peoples who are impoverished, starving and abandoned. There are many of those dispossessed people who are in vain seeking the return of what is due to them.

In addressing our thanks in advance to all those friends of Haiti who wish to send humanitarian aid to Haiti, we would like to ask you to coordinate the channelling of humanitarian aid with the constitutional Government of the Republic of Haiti and those non-governmental organizations that are accompanying the march of the people of Haiti towards democracy.

Despite the controversy that has surrounded the idea of an embargo, the people of Haiti would like to repeat 'Yes' to an embargo. Let us have a real, total and complete embargo at last. Secondly, let us put a stop to the flood of new weapons being pumped continually into Haiti. Thirdly, if a total blockade is required to achieve this, the Haitian people will welcome it. For all those efforts that you have already made and for the support that you intend to give us, may I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

One year is too long; twelve months is too long.

(spoke in Creole*)

(continued in French)

The third democratic beatitude is: Blessed are those who heroically say No to getting off scot-free; No to vengeance; Yes, to justice.

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(President Aristide)

(spoke in English)

No justice, no peace!

(spoke in French)

The refusal to give one's blessing to impunity is part of the lexicon of justice and morality. Article 42.3 of the Constitution of the Republic of Haiti lays down that

"Abuses, acts of violence and crimes perpetrated against civilians by a military official in the exercise of his duties shall come under the authority of the Courts of common law".

In less than one year, 3,000 persons have been assassinated; there have been over 40,000 political refugees; hundreds of thousands of citizens have fled throughout the country, more than a hundred journalists have fallen victim to the terror of the military; the press has been muzzled, priests have been arrested, beaten up and imprisoned, the life of Monsignor Willy Romelus has been threatened; priests, nuns and members of grass-roots ecclesiastical communities or Ti Legliz have been continually persecuted. Rural, popular, socio-professional and trade union organizations have been systematically dismantled or targeted. Many parlementarians have been persecuted. One Deputy was assassinated in cold blood. Blood is flowing; the corpses are being heaped up. Never has Haiti experienced such a ferocious and bloody dictatorship.

Rejected by all States of the world, these criminals have nevertheless been recognized by the Vatican - the only State that has elected to give its blessing to crimes that it should have condemned in the name of the God of justice and peace. What a scandal!

(President Aristide)

Because of this impunity, on 2 June 1992 these criminals burned down the Lafanmi Selavi orphanage. On 5 February 1991 these same criminals burned four street-children and destroyed their orphanage. On 11 September 1988, these same criminals burned down St. Jean Bosco's Church, killing some 50 human beings in broad daylight while they were celebrating the Eucharist.

They have destroyed human lives. But they will never, never be able to destroy our love. Let the force of love banish the shades of hatred so that the beacon of peace may shine through.

In the light of this peace, in which, as Anaxagoras said, "the visible is a window on the invisible", one may well wonder: what would the attitude of the Vatican have been if Haiti had been inhabited by white people? Secondly, what would the attitude of Pope John Paul II have been if Haiti had been Polish? Thirdly, next October Pope John Paul II will be a few kilometres away from Haiti. Will he be the Good Samaritan or the High Priest?
St. Luke 10:30-37.

In the meantime, love and peace to the Pope, because we gain no merit in loving only those who love us - Luke 6:32.

(President Aristide)

The fourth democratic beatitude: Blessed are those who reduce arms expenditures and increase expenditures for human development.

World military expenditures add up to $2 million per minute. Since 1945 there have been approximately 150 wars, which have caused a total of 20 million deaths. The developing countries' military expenditures have increased over the last three decades from $24 billion to $173 billion.

Peace is promoted by reducing the arms purchases and increasing expenditures on human development. Unfortunately, in our country military expenditures have led not to peace but to the massacre of a non-violent population. An army of 7,000 men accounts for 40 per cent of the national budget. Striking contradictions! That is not to mention drugs; some officers are implicated up to their necks in drug trafficking, a source of corruption par excellence.

In the face of so much corruption, millions of victims seem to be echoing Cicero when he asked, "Quousque tandem abutere, Catilina, patientia nostra?": "How long will you continue to abuse our patience, Catilina?" The people have categorically rejected that army. We have no need of it, they constantly repeat. "Police, yes, but this army of criminals, no" they say to anyone who will listen.

In keeping with the Constitution, we, the President of the Republic of Haiti, respond to the people in these terms: Yes to the army, but the army as it is, no. The army should be freed from Cedras and his clique, who have been responsible for the death of several thousand people. Once liberated, it will be integrated and brought up to professional standards, and, in accordance with the Constitution, we shall set up a police force separate from the army. So much, then, for preserving peace.

(President Aristide)

A constitutional and democratic State excludes despotism, tyranny, anarchy and absolute power, because absolute power corrupts absolutely.

The Republic of Haiti would be very happy to see the United Nations set up commissions made up of defenders of individual rights to inquire into violations of fundamental rights committed since 30 September 1991. Their presence in Haiti is essential to extend our good experience during the elections of 16 December 1990.

Let the United Nations and the Organization of American States meet together in Haiti, urgently, so that finally fine-sounding resolutions can yield visible and fruitful action.

The fifth democratic beatitude: Blessed are those who resist political pollution, for they will make the sun of peace shine.

Deliberate injustice creates two parallel paths: submission and resistance. We, the sons and daughters of Dessalines, Toussaint Louverture and Charlemagne Peralte, say no to submission and yes to resistance.

Tolerant towards the intolerant, non-violent towards the violent, flexible towards the intransigent, the Haitian people must make their resistance and mobilization for liberation more dynamic in order to pave the way for a democratic society.

Yes, sons and daughters of freedom,

Sons and daughters of dignity,

We reject submission.

We choose resistance.

The broad highway of resistance will once again lead us to political stability, a prerequisite for economic development. From February 1991 to September 1991 we had seven months of peace; seven months of political stability; seven months of "lavalasian" security!

(President Aristide)

(spoke in Creole*)

(continued in French)

Those seven months of security, of course, made it possible for us to obtain $511 million in gifts or loans from 15 international donors.

I pay homage to the women of Haiti, who, through their spirit, were able to make more dynamic the teaching of resistance.

(spoke in Creole*)

(continued in French)

Through active, non-violent resistance, let us mobilize energetically to defend human rights. Contempt for human life imperils everything our Haiti and all humanity hold dear.

(spoke in Creole*)

(continued in French)

Perseverance, said Plutarch, is invincible. Resistance, we say, is organic.

The Republic of Haiti offers encouragement to all those men and women on the five continents who are resisting the forces of conflict.

We have been following closely the Middle East peace negotiations and hope that they will result in a peace agreement, which all men and women urgently need.

Sixth democratic beatitude: Blessed are those who defend the truth, for they are a source of justice and peace.

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(President Aristide)

Indeed, truth remains the foundation of justice. Man can use science to kill truth or feed truth, and the same is true of political power. When leaders seek truth through objectivity they contribute to the maintenance of peace.

Economic and anti-democratic forces can follow a strategy that is able to manipulate the information sector, thus spreading an oppressive "truth". Therefore, ethics must rise up to oppose any manipulation of the truth or any acceptance of a polluted truth.

For us Haitians, men and women alike, our existence is linked to the very roots of our being. Those roots bring us the sap of the naked truth, of ethnic identity and of nourishing dignity. The same is true of our "lavalasian" policy. We take from it the sap of liberating truth and democratic ethics.

From Socrates to Heidegger, from Hegel to Jean-Paul Sartre, over and above philosophical differences, our political ethic makes it essential for us to seek truth from the very source of objectivity, for a peaceful civilization, within the truth.

(President Aristide)

That is why we chose a constitutional democracy and not a schizophrenic democracy with its implications of psychopathic breakdown, structural dislocation, verbal stereotypes, and hypertrophy of the collective super-ego. As always, we need a political psychology that furthers social peace and the realization of national interests. National interests - yes! The interests of the country - yes! The interests of the nation - yes! The interests of the nation compel us to transcend personal relationships in order to save the nation. This can be seen today in the determination of over 90 per cent of the Haitians to continue to say "No!" to the usurpers after 12 months of resistance. This can be seen in the determination of the Haitian diaspora - or the "tenth department" - which today, heroically and proudly, has taken to the streets. They are over 100,000 strong at this very moment, for that is how they say "Yes!" to democracy.

Their will - our will - is to defend not individual interests but the interests of the nation. It is noble to die for flag and fatherland! Yes, it is noble to die for flag and fatherland!

(spoke in Creole*)

(continued in French)

The sun of this peace will shine in many countries. The Republic of Haiti joyfully welcomes the presence of the United Nations in Cambodia, where there is such a thirst for justice and peace after two decades of war and isolation. It will shine one day in the Caribbean and Latin America. During the first 100 years following the arrival of Christopher Columbus in America, we lost more than 90 million human beings. This was the start of the practice

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(President Aristide)

of genocide. May the blood of our ancestors fertilize the Caribbean and America. May their spirit fortify us and guide us towards the triumph of the civilization of peace.

The seventh beatitude of democracy: Blessed are they who, regardless of class and race, love one another the Lavalas way. When the black man does not live in peace, the white man cannot enjoy his peace. When the white man does not live in peace, the black man cannot enjoy his peace. Let us love one another the Lavalas way. May the peace of the blacks be with the whites! May the peace of the whites be with the blacks! When the poor man does not live in peace, the rich man cannot enjoy his peace. When the rich man does not live in peace, the poor man cannot enjoy his peace. Let us love one another the Lavalas way. May the peace of the rich be with the poor! May the peace of the poor be with the rich!

According to Aristotle, politics demands a reciprocal and symmetrical relationship in which citizens are side by side and not one atop the other. To forge unity in diversity, let us love one another the Lavalas way. The aspiration to peace is inherent in human nature. May it fertilize political praxis, guaranteeing the growth of cultures and respect for human rights: the right to live in freedom; the right to work; the right to eat one's fill; the right of one and all to a seat at the table of democracy. Living in profound communion with our sisters and brothers in South Africa, the Republic of Haiti vigorously condemns the system of apartheid. It is indeed a modern vestige of slavery, day after day eroding human dignity.

Finally, the eighth beatitude of democracy: Blessed are they who, on the threshold of the third millenium, discover the true face of the Haitian people. Freedom, dignity, and pride: These are the values written in letters

(President Aristide)

of gold on the brow of this heroic people marching with head held high in quest of peace. Five hundred years ago, our ancestors, in search of peace, threw themselves into the sea, abandoning the boats that were carrying them from Africa to the Caribbean. After 500 years, thousands of political refugees in quest of peace have taken to the sea because the Haitian prefers to die on his feet than to live on his knees.

May the true face of the Haitian people never again - never again - be hidden behind the faces of Papa Doc, Cedras, and the tontons macoutes, all rejected viscerally, democratically, and once and for all by a bare-handed people. Freedom! Dignity! Pride! Yes! He or she who knows the Haitian diaspora - or the "tenth department" - can say, like Archimedes: "Eureka!" - "I have found it!" He or she who knows the Haitian people in Haiti can say, again like Archimedes: "Eureka!" - "I have found it! I have found Haiti, where the roots of freedom planted by Toussaint Louverture are sometimes fought, sometimes beaten, but never vanquished". In the name of the people and its sons and its holy spirit - Amen. We will continue to march with every Haitian in Haiti so that some day we be able to meet and live in real democracy.

(spoke in Creole*)

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Haiti for the statement he has just made.

Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of the Republic of Haiti, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

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* The representative did not provide for interpretation into one of the languages of the General Assembly as required by rule 53 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. RAHMAN (Bangladesh): The General Assembly stands poised at a vital watershed. It is a time of opportunity and challenge, of promise and uncertainty, of hopes and unfulfilled expectations. In many ways we are entering new and uncharted territory. We must beat out our own track with caution, deliberation and conviction. We must, above all, invoke and nurture that spirit of commonality, commitment, innovation and imagination that is so uniquely manifest today, as we confront together the unprecedented transition in world affairs.

We are all conscious of the significance of this moment in history. We are in the last decade of a tumultuous century and millennium. We are straddling the threshold of a new century - a new era - carrying with us the aspirations of our people for a better, more prosperous, peaceful and fulfilling life. Three years from now the United Nations will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. Our efforts in the interim will surely determine its course for future generations.

There is no doubt that the United Nations is but a reflection of the wishes of its component parts. It is in a real sense the collective instrument for promoting the interests of all States, weak or strong, rich or poor, large or small. At the heart of its success or failure is the contribution to its purposes and principles that each individual country must make. It is the sum total of these individual efforts that is the real foundation of the success of the United Nations in maintaining peace, securing justice and human rights, and promoting the key Charter prerogative of "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

I reaffirm today the total commitment of Bangladesh to furthering the objectives of the United Nations Charter and the cause of multilateralism. Indeed, this is a constitutional commitment. In doing so, I would like to underscore the dominant theme of my statement: How can a relatively small State contribute towards making this Organization a viable instrument, capable of dealing effectively and comprehensively with all aspects of human development, be they political, economic, social or environmental?

Mr. President, before I proceed further, let me join my voice to the well-deserved tributes paid to you, Sir, on your election to the high office of President of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. Your knowledge and experience will, I am sure, guide us well in these challenging times. I am confident that you will do great honour to the legacy left by your illustrious predecessor, Mr. Samir Shihabi, of Saudi Arabia, to whom we are all deeply indebted.

We extend our warm tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. He has taken charge and is steering the course of our Organization at perhaps its most daunting period of renewal, revival and resurgence. We pledge to him our unstinted support and cooperation in the furtherance of his endeavours.*

I would also like to welcome in our midst the many new countries that have taken their seat in the General Assembly this year, swelling our ranks to 179 Member States. Most of them represent peoples who have recently gained freedom. Their presence strengthens not only our common goal for universality but adds a new forceful voice that gives meaning to the expression of the very first words of the Charter of the United Nations: "We the peoples of the

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* Mr. Al-Haddad (Yemen), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

United Nations". We look forward to working with them in close and friendly cooperation.

Previous speakers have discussed at length the nature of the contemporary world setting, the massive pressures that have radically changed relationships between States and individuals, and the resulting positive and negative trends that have emerged. It is not my intention to repeat this analysis. Suffice it to say that one paramount task emerges: how to tilt the balance of contradictory forces in favour of the evolution of a new, more beneficial, more just and peaceful world order.

At the heart of the issue is the creation of an environment of peace. Ironically, the sources of conflict are rooted in the absence of progress in objectives we most seek to promote - the enhancement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the promotion of sustainable economic and social development for wider prosperity, the alleviation of human distress, and the curtailment of the existence and use of weapons of mass destruction.

Of real concern to third world countries are certain negative impulses. A prime factor is continuing anxiety that their interests are being marginalized both politically and economically. Insularity and internal domestic preoccupations of the major Powers open up prospects of a power vacuum and of the consequent danger of regional competition and hegemony. Diversion of resources along an East-West axis can leave the South starved of political resources and investment.

These fears are multiplied by the emergence of new constraints that circumscribe development cooperation - standards of good governance, rigid structural adjustment measures, environmental criteria and scrutiny of military intentions and preparedness.

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

What is basically at issue is a degree of perception. It is not opposition to these recognizably needed changes, but resistance to any form of dictation with regard to how they should be achieved. A flexible attitude is perhaps the best prescription. Too often the role of people has been ignored to the peril of the world community. One extreme manifestation is that national self-assertion has resurfaced. It has brought realization to the right of self-determination, but it has also released long-suppressed ethnic, cultural, linguistic and cultural rivalries and has unleashed bigotry, extremism and violence. This is at a time when, after years of patient pressure, racism and racial discrimination were being isolated and apartheid dismantled. They have generated powerful centrifugal forces that threaten established boundaries. At the same time, poverty, disease, famine and repression have joined together to produce a massive movement of people within and beyond national borders - 17 million refugees and 20 million displaced persons worldwide - all of which have combined to create a new dimension of insecurity that must be addressed in all its ramifications.

The pre-eminent task before us is to forge a new, more focused and action-oriented world agenda to promote peace, tolerance, justice and development. It is of crucial import that this should be time-targeted, prioritized, fully-funded and cost-efficient.

The structure and shape of this agenda has already assumed significant substance. The first-ever summit of the Security Council members took place in January 1992. The outcome of that meeting concentrated on an agenda for peace encompassing preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and what the Secretary-General characterized as post-conflict peace-building. Other substantial inputs have been made or are envisaged including, inter alia:

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

the 1990 World Summit for children; the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on narcotic drugs; the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Conference on Environment and Development; the 1993 summit on human rights; the 1994 conference on population and development; the 1995 world conference on women and a world summit for social development. These accompany far-reaching proposals that are under way to reform, strengthen and streamline the Organization to enable it to fulfil its responsibility as the central organ for the cooperative management of the world's problems.

If the world Organization is to succeed and flourish, it will depend as much on the resilience of its Member States to prosper individually as on their ability constructively to contribute to its great goals and purposes. Positive efforts by each country cumulatively strengthen the sum total of the United Nations mandate. What then is Bangladesh's contribution to this grand design?

The quest for a new world order must begin with putting our own house in order. In our region, Bangladesh has sought actively to maintain the momentum and credibility of the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) and by promoting its essentially socio-economic mandate to create a broad-based climate of confidence-building, to reduce tension in the region and to resolve outstanding bilateral differences by dialogue and negotiation. It is on us, as Chairman of the forthcoming seventh summit of SAARC, that the onus of responsibility has fallen to promote these aims in more productive and tangible ways, especially as SAARC stands poised to enter its second cycle of annual summit meetinqs.

Bilaterally, the democratically elected Government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, has initiated concerted steps to bolster a

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

new chapter of positive interaction with our immediate neighbours, following years of inactivity. The upsurge of democracy throughout the region has significantly contributed to this objective. In recent months official visits by the Prime Minister to Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan have been motivated by one major determinant - to eschew past inhibitions and look to the future. Some issues remain complex and sensitive but approaches to solutions are being forged through continuing and pragmatic dialogue.

The exodus of Myanmar refugees to Bangladesh since November 1991 imposed a heavy additional burden on the new government, coming as it did in the wake of the devastating cyclone of May 1991 and the cumulative adverse impact of the aftermath of the Gulf War. The option of confrontation loomed large. Yet through circumspection, restraint and a conscious defusion of tension, the groundwork was laid for an eventual solution by mutual agreement in April 1992.

Despite this agreement, some 270,000 Myanmar refugees still remain in our territory as efforts continue to repatriate them in honour, safety and dignity and above all on a voluntary basis. Given the dire compulsions under which the refugees fled, the process of persuading them to return is a difficult and drawn-out one. Time targets are at best approximate and increase the liabilities of the Government in terms of costs, environmental damage and tension with and among the local population. The critical catalyst for guaranteeing safe repatriation and resettlement remains an impartial United Nations presence. Efforts continue to overcome Myanmar's reticence on this score. Yet, bilaterally the two countries are cooperating positively. I am happy to announce that the first minimal step has been taken with the voluntary repatriation of some 49 refugees on 23 September 1992. It is hoped

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

this will constitute a crack in the wall towards the voluntary return of the remaining refugees.

Globally, Bangladesh supports all measures to strengthen the United Nation's capacity to prevent war and resolve conflicts and to extend this capacity in new and imaginative ways. It is of key importance to preserve the security of small States and to promote the concept of preventive diplomacy, especially to anticipate and contain damage in times of man-made or natural disasters. It is a matter of some satisfaction that the role of the United Nations in helping to resolve the Myanmar refugee problem was the first objective test of preventive diplomacy in action. The visit of Mr. Jan Eliasson, the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs, to Bangladesh and Myanmar respectively, was to trigger the agreement between the two countries for repatriation of the refugees.

We believe that there is a real chance today that collective security can be achieved through promotion of the unrealized premises of the United Nations Charter, including the fostering of regional security arrangements under Chapter VIII. Regional groupings can and must concentrate on harnessing durable structures of stability, starting at the base and working through confidence-building measures and broad-based socio-economic cooperation.

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

Reduced reliance on military security must be buttressed through monitoring, regulating and limiting the growing traffic in arms. At the national level, doctrines of minimum defence self-sufficiency equated with the innovative use of armed forces as human development investment could lead to a realistic release of a peace dividend. One recent measure of note in Bangladesh is that budget allocations for defence this year are less than those for education. At the same time, we have purposefully contributed to United Nations peace-keeping efforts through the despatch of military and civilian contingents to monitor the elections in Namibia, to police cease-fire lines in the Gulf, to help clear mines and support the restructuring effort in Kuwait, and to assist the United Nations peace processes in Cambodia, Yugoslavia and Western Sahara. We strongly support the strengthening of the financial and institutional base of peace-keeping and its growth in new and imaginative directions.

We have striven, through specific initiatives, to participate constructively and with moderation and pragmatism in all socio-economic forums, especially to project the concerns of the least developed countries and to keep alive the commitment to preferential treatment of the poorest of the poor. The critical socio-economic situation in Africa deserves special attention.

In Bangladesh we have learnt one fundamental lesson: there is no shortcut to progress, no matter how reliable or generous our friends may be. Whether it relates to achieving freedom from political oppression, vindicating human rights or seeking social and economic emancipation, a country must ultimately depend on itself.

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

Three consequent goals have emerged: first and foremost, to bolster individual self-reliance and move away from aid-centricity to more defined development cooperation; secondly, to intensify South-South cooperation and collective self reliance in such specific and practical areas as food production, manpower planning, trade, investments and joint ventures and modalities to implement them; and finally, to reactivate constructive North-South dialogue and the creation of an external environment conducive to the revitalizing of growth and the targeting, in particular, of the reduction and elimination of poverty.

There has been a growing convergence of strategies to redress the critical issues of falling investment, reduction and restructuring of debt, trade promotion and the transfer of technology. Successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round remains a pressing priority. These goals must be pursued to a logical and urgent conclusion.

Another crucial element must be stressed: the development objective must be put in sharper focus than the theme of adjustment that has long overshadowed it; structural adjustment measures are necessary, but must avoid undue hardships which often lead the poorest sections of the population to bear a disproportionate part of the burden.

At home, a crucial policy imperative has been the drawing up of a vision and strategy for the future that would align participatory democracy with the country's development needs. This new development perspective focuses on human development, participatory planning, and greater induction and involvement of women in development and the alleviation of poverty. It recognizes the need to raise investment so as to achieve growth in excess of 5 per cent per annum, and identifies efficiency improvement as one of the

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

important means of attaining this end. It aims at achieving a symbiosis between agriculture and industry that will address the needs of growth, employment generation and poverty alleviation. To ensure that this link is sustained and can lead to a take-off for the economy, investment in the social sectors is given central importance.

The factors I have mentioned highlight one basic reality: the fabric of self-reliance is intimately woven out of three strands - democracy, development and human rights.

Our own experience has underlined certain basic truths. Without democracy, a people's potential for socio-economic progress cannot flower. Equally, without improved standards of living and a vision for the future that can sustain hope, democracy will wither. Human rights become meaningless in the face of the dire constraints of poverty, hunger, disease and illiteracy. No other right can take precedence over the amelioration of this condition.

Bangladesh fully reaffirms that basic human rights and fundamental freedoms are of universal validity. We believe that a human rights culture embracing all freedoms must evolve in a uniform way. Perhaps the most vital aspect of this that has yet to find universal acceptance is recognition of the right to development. Surely, peace and stability cannot be achieved unless conditions are created to remove the root causes of war and conflict, that is, economic and social deprivation.

We look forward to participating in the second World Conference on Human Rights, in June 1993, and to ensuring that the Conference addresses all aspects of human rights on the basis of universality, indivisibility and impartiality.

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

Since the only real protection of small and weaker States is firmly rooted in the rule of law, Bangladesh has constantly striven to promote its progressive development and codification internationally and regionally, and to promote its due reflection at home through enabling legislation. We shall remain active in pursuing these endeavours, especially in promoting such priority areas as the non-navigational uses of international water-courses, the international law of the sea, environmental protection and the status of refugees, economic migrants and displaced persons. No one can doubt the serious potential for conflict that the absence of law holds in these areas. They remain a pressing priority for concentrated movement forward.

Through national legislation, its regional extension and international participation, we have also contributed to addressing solutions to global problems of drugs, terrorism and protection of the environment. We welcome in particular the outcome of the Rio Conference, which has addressed the issues of environment and development, which are inextricably linked. Sustainable development calls for a new global partnership, including the provision of new and additional financial resources to developing countries and adequate access for them to environmentally sound technology.

Social aspects must also remain at the heart of our endeavours, especially concentration on disadvantaged groups that the pursuit of economic growth tends to bypass. We therefore wholeheartedly support the convening of the World Summit for Social Development.

Bangladesh supports the view that the full integration of women in the development process at all levels is of critical importance. We stand committed to promoting the success of the World Conference on Women to be held in 1995.

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

Equally, the rights and status of children remain a paramount priority. This year the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, along with the United Nations Children's Fund, is focusing particular attention on the rights of children in South Asia, in keeping with the commitment of the countries of the region to the full implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children.

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

No statement is complete if we do not address ourselves to some of the outstanding conflict and tension points around the globe. Since the creation of the United Nations, over 100 major conflicts have taken a toll of some 20 million dead. The cold war imposed its own peculiar threat to security. With its demise, vital new possibilities have opened up for forging a new security regime. The Uniced Nations has emerged as a central instrument for the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Bangladesh is determined to contribute in whatever ways it can, directly or indirectly, to making it more effective and responsive in new and creative ways.

I turn now to the critical political issues on our agenda.

Bangladesh's consistent and categorical position on the Middle East question and the issue of Palestine needs no reiteration. We believe the Palestinians' cause to be founded on justice. We welcome the convening of the peace conference and the start of substantive parallel negotiations over the framework of a peaceful settlement. We believe that this should be comprehensive, should include Palestine, and must be based on a serious commitment by Israel to abide by Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), and the principle of returning land for peace. It is our hope that Israel will show sincerity of purpose and greater flexibility and will refrain from delaying the peace process.

It is our fervent hope that all parties in Afghanistan will respect the cease-fire and faithfully implement the Peshawar Accord of April 1992, which reflected a broad consensus of all Afghan leaders. This would lay the groundwork for holding free and fair elections so that a permanent government could emerge reflecting the wishes and aspirations of the Afghan people. At the same time, it would ensure much needed political, economic and social stability. There is vital need for the world community to contribute

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

generously and actively towards the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan and towards the safe and voluntary return of refugees to their homeland.

The implementation of the 1991 Paris Agreement on a comprehensive settlement in Cambodia has progressed apace, despite obstacles raised by one of the four factions to move into the second phase of implementaiton. We welcome this advance and commend the intense and diverse attempts by the United Nations to nurture national reconciliation to foster the democratic process and to build peace and stability. In our own small way, as a part of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), Bangladesh is committed to end the suffering of the Cambodian people and to allow them to determine freely their own destiny.

The vicious cycle of starvation, factional fighting, the break-down of central authority, the violence and the exodus of refugees in Somalia has shocked the world. The response has been belated. We fully support the Security Council decision to strengthen the United Nations peace-keeping presence so as to break this cycle through a comprehensive programme of action that could reach vital relief assistance, consolidate the cease-fire, curtail violence and bring about national reconciliation. We also welcome the efforts of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Arab League to convene a conference on national reconciliation and unity in Somalia.

The upheaval in the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is a cause of utmost concern. It has unleashed a bitter mix of conflict, ambition, hatred and ethnic brutality. The August 1992 London Conference and the mechanisms it has instituted remain a vital hope for the intensification of

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

the search for solutions in all aspects and on a continuous basis. Meanwhile, the world is appalled by the Serbian aggression in Bosnia and Herzegovina, by the massacre of innocent civilians, the systematic persecution and even annihilation through the abhorrent policy of "ethnic cleansing".

Bangladesh has taken a forthright stand in all international forums to condemn these acts. It has joined in the call for more decisive and resolute action that would reverse the aggression, stop the brutality, and ensure the unhindered supply of relief. We have also denied the claim of Serbia and Montenegro to be the successor State of former Yugoslavia in the United Nations and other international bodies. We believe that much more needs to be done to end the bloodshed and fully restore the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We remain steadfast in our support for the people of South Africa in their struggle to achieve their cherished goal of equal rights and majority rule. There can be no compromise until we have achieved the complete dismantling of apartheid. The international community must remain vigilant in its efforts to bring an effective end to the recent outbreak of violence and create conditions for negotiations leading towards a peaceful transition to a democratic, non-racial and united South Africa.

Bangladesh welcomes the intensification of efforts to find a just and viable solution to the Cyprus problem. We commend the Secretary-General for his personal initiatives and role in the difficult process of reaching agreement on a broad-based set of ideas leading towards an overall framework agreement. We hope that the leaders of the two communities who are to meet on 26 October 1992 will pursue direct and uninterrupted negotiations to reach an amicable and durable solution that will serve the legitimate interests of both communities.

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

In Western Sahara, we fully support the Secretary-General's initiatives to reactivate the implementation of the settlement plan and to help overcome differences over criteria of eligibility to vote. We hope that the referendum can be effectively organized and supervised and thus bring about an early end to this long-standing dispute.

In other parts of the third world, bilateral, regional and international efforts have seen many positive initiatives and advances. It is the combined solidarity and sustained moral pressure of the world community that has created a climate conducive to peaceful change. The enhanced role and contribution of the International Court of Justice also now assumes much greater relevance and credibility and must be strengthened.

Let me say in conclusion that the world has reached a critical point in its struggle to advance stability and well-being. No doubt violence, aggression, foreign occupation, narrowly conceived nationalism, racial and religious discrimination and gaping social and economic disparities still persist. Yet there is today greater confidence and conviction that a better world is truly within our reach. We are faced with an opportunity rare in the history of civilization to carry forward the momentum to resolve disputes peacefully, to promote partnership and responsible relations among States, to strengthen the rule of law and uplift the quality of life of all peoples in greater freedom. We must surely move with deliberation towards the realization of what the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, calls

> "the vast potential of this unique Organization to bring new life to the world of the Charter." (A/47/1, para. 170)

Mr. MANITSKI (Estonia): Let me first convey to Mr. Ganev my congratulations on his election as President of this session. His election is a fitting tribute to his personal and professional qualities, and to his country, Bulgaria, which is playing an increasingly important role in international affairs. We wish him success in accomplishing his tasks, and we pledge to him our support and cooperation.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Secretary-General, Ambassador Boutros Boutros-Ghali, especially for his efforts to help find peaceful solutions to conflicts throughout the world. We wish him success and will support him in every way possible in his pursuit of implementing the objectives and principles of the United Nations.

We congratulate and look forward to working with all of the States recently admitted to the United Nations.

Today, Estonia's most vital task is to augment and secure our newly restored independence, including further development of our democratic institutions, our economy, our national security and our international relations.

I will begin by addressing accusations made here last week regarding alleged human rights abuses in Estonia by Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev. It is incomprehensible to us that Mr. Kozyrev maintains that foreign citizens should be allowed to vote in Estonian parliamentary elections. Mr. Kozyrev's suggestions that minorities in some countries should be placed under United Nations trusteeship puzzles us, since Article 78 of the same Charter of the United Nations to which he referred states:

(Mr. Manitski, Estonia)

"The trusteeship system shall not apply to ... Members of the United Nations, relationship among which shall be based on respect for the principle of sovereign equality."

It should be further noted that, according to United Nations documents, the term "minority" does not apply to foreign nationals, migrant workers and colonists.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform the Assembly that Estonia has invited a mission from the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights in Warsaw to investigate any and all allegations of human rights violations in Estonia. I invite the Russian Federation likewise to invite a similar mission to visit and review Russia's recent human rights record, especially with respect to minority rights.

During the year since independence was restored, Estonia has made every effort to create a State based on equal justice for all. On 21 October 1991, Estonia acceded to fundamental international agreements protecting human rights, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Estonia has embarked on the long and arduous process of updating legislation inherited from the Soviet occupation, bringing its laws into compliance with international human rights norms.

In a referendum held on 28 June 1992 Estonian citizens approved a new democratic Constitution. According to its Constitution, Estonia is a parliamentary republic that guarantees a division of powers and independent courts. Elections for a new Parliament and President - the first free,

(Mr. Manitski, Estonia)

democratic elections in more than 50 years - were held nine days ago, on 20 September, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the new Constitution. All Estonian citizens, defined by the 1938 pre-Soviet occupation Law on Citizenship and additional legislation that expanded enfranchisement, were entitled to vote. These laws also provide a legal basis for those people who settled in Estonia as a result of Soviet occupation to apply for Estonian citizenship by naturalization, if they so desire.*

Numerous international experts have concluded that Estonia's citizenship law is among the most liberal in the world.

Estonia has historically acted as a bridge between Western Europe and Russia. Relations of good-neighbourliness with Russia, in which both parties respect the other's sovereignty and laws, and strictly adhere to principles regarding the inviolability of State borders and non-interference in the internal affairs of another State, will allow Estonia to continue its intermediary role to the mutual benefit of both States.

The realization of this mediatory role has been complicated by differences between Estonia's and Russia's interpretation of the legal status of the Republic of Estonia. Estonia considers itself to be the same State as the pre-Second World War Republic of Estonia, whose legal de jure continuity was not interrupted by German occupation or Soviet occupation and annexation. All consequences of this annexation are thus ex tunc - not valid from their inception, a view that is shared by nearly all countries of the world. Several pre-war agreements concluded with States that recognize the legal continuity of Estonia have recently re-entered into force.

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* The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Manitski, Estonia)

Estonia also respects the principle of the legal continuity of citizenship. Because Russia is the self-styled successor State to the Soviet Union, Estonia considers citizens of the former Soviet Union who currently reside in Estonia as a result of Soviet occupation to be Russian citizens, unless they have become citizens of another country.

Russia, however, believes that Estonia is a new State, created in 1991 as a result of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, although the disintegration of the Soviet Union occurred after the re-establishment of Estonia's independence.

(Mr. Manitski, Estonia)

The development of Estonian-Russian relations must be viewed in the context of the development of democracy in both countries. The Estonian freedom movement had a positive influence on the democratization of Russia and other Central and Eastern European countries. Estonia's declaration of sovereignty on 16 November 1988 served as a practical example for other freedom movements.

It is interesting to note that Russian democrats, including Boris Yeltsin, printed their newspapers in Estonia when printing such papers was forbidden in Russia, helping to spread democratic ideals in Russia.

A treaty between Estonia and Russia in which both countries recognized the other as independent and sovereign States was signed on 12 January 1991. Estonia considers this treaty to be one of the cornerstones of Estonian-Russian relations, and places great value on the fact that Russia was one of the first States to recognize the restoration of Estonian independence.

Unfortunately, there are Russian politicians who assert that Estonia should not be considered separate from Russia. They hold that Russia has historical and geopolitical claims to Estonian territory and that Estonia has no right to independence. There is a desire to preserve a Russian military presence in Estonia at any cost, and to bind Estonia to the Russian Federation through an international campaign which demands Estonian citizenship for Russian citizens while retaining Russia's right to be their guardian and protector.

Having been a victim of the Soviet Union's imperialist policies for more than 50 years, Estonia has not only the right under international law, but also the moral obligation to demand that Russia withdraw its military forces and refrain from interfering in Estonia's internal affairs.

(Mr. Manitski, Estonia)

The need for a withdrawal of Russian armed forces from Estonia is the primary stumbling block in bilateral relations between Estonia and the Russian Federation. While we acknowledge that the leadership of Russia now has a better appreciation of our demands than at the beginning of our negotiations, Estonia still calls for international support to accelerate the unconditional, early, orderly and complete withdrawal of foreign military forces from Estonian soil. We also appeal for the ex-Soviet military nuclear reactors in Estonia to be placed under international supervision.

This is why we are presenting a draft resolution to the General Assembly on the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Baltic States. A similar resolution was adopted by the recently concluded Summit of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. This reflects our belief that, although regional conflicts and disputes should be resolved on a regional basis, the United Nations should be ready to act preventively, and should express its opinion on matters which may potentially affect the security of a whole continent.

None the less, I must emphasize that throughout history economic, cultural and scientific cooperation have played an important, positive role in Estonian-Russian relations, and Estonia sincerely hopes this cooperation will continue. The integration of both Estonia and Russia into a democratic Europe will also help ensure that our relations remain good-neighbourly in the long run.

Estonians have strong historical, cultural and linguistic ties to the Nordic countries. These ties, which the Soviet system tried to sever, are now actively being restored. As an illustration of how quickly bilateral relations have changed for Estonia, I would mention that Finland recently

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surpassed the Commonwealth of Independent States as Estonia's number one trading partner.

Estonia embarked on the path of economic reform towards a market economy at the same time as it launched its political battle for independence. As a country in transition, we have progressed to a situation in which the vestiges of the command economy have almost been eliminated and the first signs of a healthy market economy have appeared.

The monetary reform carried out in Estonia on 20 June this year was an important step towards a market economy. The sole legal tender in Estonia is now the Estonian kroon. Monetary reform has helped establish conditions which are essential for the progress of privatization. Wide-scale privatization will eliminate a situation in which the State helps essentially bankrupt enterprises remain in business, and will instead promote the development of new private enterprises.

With the close cooperation of international institutions, a great deal of work has been done to ensure that we accurately report and measure our economic performance through reliable statistics. For this reason, we are concerned about how our assessment rate here at the United Nations is calculated through the exclusive use of Soviet statistics. Estonian national accounts and foreign exchange statistics are being ignored. The use of current methodology means that our assessment is calculated on the basis of political rather than economic considerations.

Both the Stockholm Initiative and the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace" (A/47/277) address the need to prevent conflicts before they arise. During the past year we have seen how difficult it is to solve

(Mr. Manitski, Estonia)

conflicts once they escalate to war. Estonia considers preventive diplomacy to be of the utmost importance.

The United Nations must have the collective will to become actively involved in the prevention of potential conflicts. This Organization carries the burden of history while facing a future full of hope and possibilities. Estonia is determined to perform its role in helping to create a new Europe and the new world of tomorrow.

Prince SAUD AL-FAISAL (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): I would like to begin by expressing to you, Mr. President, our sincere congratulations on your election to the presidency of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. The trust and confidence bestowed upon you reflects appreciation for you personally as well as recognition of the positive role played by your country, Bulgaria, in international affairs. I wish you success in the pursuit of your mission.

On this occasion, I would like to congratulate your predecessor, Ambassador Samir Shihabi, for his effective conduct of the affairs of the General Assembly during its previous session.

I also would like to acknowledge the continued sincere efforts by the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to enhance the prospects for peace and reduce the elements of tension which prevail in many parts of the world. These efforts and pursuits represent a continuation of the efforts of his predecessor, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar.

I am pleased to join with the other heads of delegations in welcoming all the States which have joined the United Nations this year so that they may participate, along with all other Member States, in realizing the noble objectives of this Organization. It is my hope that these States will be able to play an effective role in the Organization, and contribute positively to the realization of peace, security, stability, and development for the benefit of the international community as a whole.

We are assembled here in this international forum in which nations, small and large, powerful and weak, meet on the basis of equality and work together for the establishment of right and justice, order and security, prosperity and peace. We learn from the lessons of the past, to chart a course for the future in an environment of fast-changing global conditions and

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Saudi Arabia)

circumstances. We follow, with great interest, the general trends of what has come to be known as the new world order, an order founded upon the principles of the United Nations and on the tenets of international legality. This order rejects the use of force in the settlement of disputes. We must understand that this order cannot evolve by itself, but requires us to change our perception of the role of the United Nations. We must develop our methods and practices in harmony with the basic principles of the Organization, whose purpose is to replace war and destruction with cooperation between nations and peoples and thereby lead to development, respect for the dignity of man, security, peace and prosperity for our world.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to bring about a fundamental change in our understanding of the role of the United Nations from one of crisis management and the preservation of peace to one of active participation in peacemaking.

In this context, I would like to express appreciation for the proposals presented by the Secretary-General for enhancing the role and effectiveness of the United Nations. His Agenda for Peace which contained those proposals, deserves prompt attention, objective consideration and thorough study in order for us to arrive at an appropriate formula for the functioning of the Organization that would be compatible with its desired more effective role. Subsequently, attention could be given to the introduction of basic structural and institutional changes, if required.

Even a cursory review of the current international situation would reveal that there still remain hotbeds of tension which threaten security and stability in many regions of the world. It would show too that the role of the United Nations becomes increasingly more important concomitantly with the

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal,
Saudi Arabia)

increase in the possibilities and opportunities for cooperation among nations in enhancing and supporting the Organization so that no nation may commit aggression against or threaten the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of any other nation.

The United Nations has clearly demonstrated that it is capable of playing such a role when it firmly faced up to the Iraqi aggression against its neighbour, Kuwait, a peaceful nation that may be small in size but which plays a major role and makes major contributions to the family of nations. By so doing, the United Nations was able to liberate Kuwait from a blatant aggression and restore legality to its territory. The image of this noble stand still remains before us and is indelibly etched in our minds.

On this occasion, it behoves us to express our appreciation and admiration for this role and to emphasize now, more than ever, the need for it to continue and be promoted, for we have noticed recently the return of the Iraqi regime to the pattern of threats and false claims regarding Kuwait in a manner that is reminiscent of that regime's declarations on the eve of its aggression against Kuwait. In so doing, it makes a mockery of its obligations under international treaties and resolutions. It also continues to procrastinate in implementing the resolutions of the Security Council and fails to comply with their stipulations. It has given itself the right, on the basis of sovereignty, to starve and humiliate the Iraqi people and subject Iraq to dangers that threaten its unity and security while it goes on claiming, falsely and slanderously, that it is the international community that is responsible for the dangers that beset Iraq and the miseries of its people.

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal,
Saudi Arabia)

We are totally convinced that the only means of averting instability in the region and dealing with the suffering of the people of Iraq lies, first and foremost in ensuring the complete and comprehensive implementation of the resolution of the Security Council which reflect the collective will of the international community.

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

We have heard, with great concern, the declaration by the United Arab Emirates that its efforts have failed to achieve a peaceful and amicable solution with the Islamic Republic of Iran in relation to the complete sovereignty of the United Arab Emirates over the three islands of Abu Mousa, Tun the Greater and Tun the Smaller. We express our support for the position taken by the United Arab Emirates on this issue and for its demand that Iran reverse its unilateral actions and that the problem be settled through negotiations on the basis of international law and international legality.

The Middle East is among the regions which attract a greal deal of the international community's attention and is the focus of its efforts. It is time that this region enjoyed its rightful share of peace, security and stability so that all its energies may be directed towards development and all its resources may be devoted to ensuring the prosperity of its peoples. The Middle East is capable of providing a decent standard of living for all its inhabitants and has the potential to become a peaceful oasis of stability, prosperity and creativity.

To achieve the objectives we desire, it is our vital duty to strive to eliminate the threat posed by the stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We therefore welcome the conclusion of negotiations on the non-proliferation convention banning chemical weapons. The draft convention resulting from those negotiations is before the General Assembly at its current session. We affirm our support for the objectives of the draft convention. This support derives from the great concern of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to make the Middle East a region free from weapons of mass destruction of all kinds whether nuclear, chemical or biological. However,

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Saudi Arabia)

that goal can be reached only when all States in the region without exception refrain from the production, stockpiling or possession of weapons of mass destruction of any kinds.

It should be noted that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has adhered, both in word and in deed, to the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and the Arab States have demonstrated the collective will to adhere to that Treaty as well. It has therefore become imperative that all States in the region, including Israel, abide by both the chemical-weapons convention and the non-proliferation Treaty, so as to achieve the desired balance necessary for peace, security and stability for all States in the region.

The Arab States have expressed a sincere, genuine desire to establish a permanent, just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. This has been demonstrated by their participation in the peace negotiations sponsored by the United States and the Russian Federation. Their positive position in those negotiations has proved to be a serious orientation towards ending the Arab-Israeli conflict and towards achieving a just settlement of the Palestinian question that would ensure the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and other relevant resolutions of international legality.

In that context, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has lent its full support to the current Middle East peace process. Saudi Arabia believes that no genuine peace can be achieved in the Middle East unless a permanent, just solution to the Palestinian question is reached and unless Israel withdraws from all the occupied Arab territories, including Al-Quds which is an integral part of the

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Saudi Arabia)

occupied Arab territories. The question of Al-Quds has a focal place in the policy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and is one of its constant concerns, within the context of the relevant United Nations resolutions and of the resolutions of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

The success of the current Middle East peace process clearly depends on a serious, genuine commitment by Israel to implement the resolutions of international legality and on Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, including Al-Quds Al-Sharif.

The Lebanese Government has made considerable progress in the implementation of the Taef accords and has adopted the necessary political and constitutional measures in that context. We must continue to support the efforts of the legitimate authorities in Lebanon and contribute to the process of reconstruction in Lebanon. In that regard, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia appeals to the international community to help facilitate the establishment of an international fund to assist Lebanon. We must also reiterate the need for an Israeli commitment fully and unconditionally to implement Security Council resolution 425 (1978), which calls on Israel to withdraw from southern Lebanon to enable the Lebanese Government to extend legitimate authority over the entire territory of Lebanon.

The General Assembly was right in deciding to deny the legality of the succession of the so-called Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the seat held by the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We view this as a step in the right direction and hope that other steps will follow with a view to restoring peace and stability to that part of the Balkans.

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Saudi Arabia)

The people of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina are falling victim to a genocidal war waged by Serbian forces with the support of Serbia and Montenegro. That genocidal war has claimed thousands of innocent victims and has resulted in the displacement of a large portion of the population away from their homes and possessions. My country has already declared its full support for the decisions and resolutions adopted with the consent of all parties concerned at the recent London Conference on the situation in the former Yugoslavia.

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We hope that concerted efforts will be made to ensure the full and serious implementation of those resolutions. So far, however, we regret that none of them has been implemented. We refer to resolutions such as those concerned with the placement of heavy weapons and artillery under international supervision; declaring the airspace of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina a no-fly zone for the operations of military aircraft; the release of all prisoners-of-war and detainees; the dismantling of detention camps; and the termination of the policy of ethnic cleansing.

On this issue, the Government of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques does not believe that ensuring the delivery of humanitarian assistance through the United Nations to the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina is sufficient. Rather, we believe that all necessary measures should be adopted to stop all the acts of genocide and displacement that are being perpetrated by the Serbian forces with the support of the Belgrade regime. That requires the intensification of pressure on the Serbs and their supporters to force them to abide by the commitments they took upon themselves at the London Conference. The creation of a permanent mechanism to monitor the implementation of those commitments is very necessary.

We note with grave concern that there is some hesitation in declaring the airspace of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina a no-fly zone for the military aircraft of Serbia and Montenegro. The hesitation ostensibly stems from a concern that such a step would lead to an aggravation of the situation. But the situation is extremely grave as it is and cannot get much worse. The real dangers to be taken into consideration are those which the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina face, namely, genocide, displacement and

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torture. All of those constitute the most flagrant violations of the United Nations Charter, the principles and tenets of international law, and the Fourth Geneva Convention. The war that rages there is not even a civil war but a war of extermination waged openly on the people of a sovereign, independent State whose territory has been occupied by the perpetrators of that brutal and savage aggression.

Accordingly, we call upon the Security Council of the United Nations to take all necessary measures under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, including Article 42; starting with the declaring of the airspace of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina a no-fly zone for the air forces of Serbia and Montenegro and ensuring the withdrawal of all regular and irregular Serbian forces from the territories of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the same time, we urge the international community to make available all possible material, military and moral support to enable the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina to exercise fully the legitimate right of self-defence. In the absence of an effective collective security mechanism, the arms embargo on the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be lifted.

We are also of the view that those responsible for grave violations of the Fourth Geneva Convention should be apprehended and placed on trial according to the principles and provisions of international law. We also support the right of the people and Government of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to just compensation from Serbia and Montenegro for the loss of life and property they have suffered.

Somalia is currently a nation plagued by disasters and tragedies as a result of a destructive civil war which has brought upon its people death and

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

displacement and undermined its unity and territorial integrity. The Government of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques have endeavoured from the outset of the conflict in sisterly Somalia to contain that conflict invited all the parties to the conflict to meet on Saudi soil for the purpose of achieving national reconciliation. Saudi Arabia still exerts all possible efforts to put an end to that fratricidal conflict. Saudi Arabia also provides assistance and relief to Somalia and unequivocally supports the role of the United Nations in delivering assistance to those who deserve it. It has welcomed the dispatch of international forces to supervise operations that provide humanitarian assistance to all regions of Somalia. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hopes that concerted international efforts will be made to provide all possible assistance and relief to this afflicted nation and supports the effort to put an end to the bloodshed. We urge all Somali factions to work together towards making their national interest and human values their overriding objective so as to eliminate the causes of conflict and disunity among them.

After 13 years of successful jihad the Afghani people were able to triumph over injustice and regain their national identity. On this occasion we look forward to the joining of all constructive and sincere efforts to enable the Afghani people to achieve security and stability in their nation. We also look forward to the return of normal conditions throughout Afghanistan, to make possible the rebuilding of what has been destroyed and thus to enable the people of Afghanistan to work towards achieving a national unity that would bring together the various groups and organizations and provide a climate conducive to national unity and the deployment of concerted

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Saudi Arabia)

efforts in pooling all energies and resources for the well-being and in the interests of that country's people.

We also need to point out that that part of the world is still suffering from the continuation of the Jamu-Kashmir problem, which continues to be an element of instability in the region. The Government of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques believe that a solution must be found on the basis of United Nations resolutions to put an end to this long-standing conflict which has cast its shadow over relations between the two neighbours, India and Pakistan.

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

While voicing its regrets at the violence South Africa has been experiencing over the past few months and the serious setbacks it has caused to the efforts aiming at ending the apartheid system, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia welcomes the recent developments in that country, which revive our hope for progress towards the dismantling of that abhorrent system. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supports a major role for the United Nations in offering appropriate solutions and in working towards the establishment of a society governed by equality and justice.

The positive changes that have taken place in the international political situation are bound to pave the way for addressing the issues of development and for the creation of an international economic environment that would help the developing nations to achieve the sort of economic and social development that would enable them to realize the ambitions and aspirations of their peoples after a better life of peace and prosperity. The developed industrialized nations can cooperate in making this possible by opening their markets to the products of the developing nations, ending all protectionist measures, bringing about at an early date a successful outcome to the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade talks and by finding an urgent solution to the debt problem. Economic cooperation between the developing countries themselves is also necessary as it would constitute a fundamental tool for the promotion of international economic growth.

Questions pertaining to the situation of the world economy are of great importance and interest to us in Saudi Arabia, for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has a stake in ensuring the stability and soundness of the world economy and in avoiding the hurdles and pitfalls that may affect its growth.

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Proceeding from this, it has responded positively to the ongoing discussions on the environment and development and has shouldered its responsibility in this respect by participating in the international deliberations aimed at finding well-balanced and practicable solutions to the questions of climatic change on a sound scientific basis.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is convinced that the future of the world and the prosperity of all its inhabitants depend on a clear understanding of the environmental problems that face the planet, full understanding of the consequences that may result from the policies adopted in dealing with those problems, careful weighing of the burdens and commitments taken by the countries of the world upon themselves in addressing those problems, special attention to the situation of the developing energy producers and consumers alike and careful examination of the effects the policies adopted in dealing with the problems may have on the growth of the economies of those countries.

This would constitute a valuable contribution to the achievement of comprehensive development and the raising of the standard of living of our peoples so that they may enjoy prosperity, peace, security and stability. The current international situation that has developed from the ending of the cold war and the progress achieved in the areas of disarmament and reductions in conventional weapons, is a rare opportunity indeed for channelling resultant windfalls towards solving the problems of development and underdevelopment.

The international community is on the threshold of a historic new era whose challenges and promises are unfolding under our eyes. We are duty-bound to lay solid and equitable foundations that define the parameters of the future that humanity has always aspired after, a future in which no one would awaken to the expectation of war or goes to bed haunted by the nightmarish

(Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Saudi Arabia)

prospects of destruction, a future that would melt down the weapons of destruction in order to forge the tools of prosperity for all, a future in which the dangers of pollution, the effects of underdevelopment and the pains of displacement would vanish. We shall never attain such a future unless we lay the foundations of peace on right and justice. And peace is the essence of our Islamic faith. As the Holy Koran says:

O ye who believe!
Enter into Islam
Whole-heartedly;
And follow not
The footsteps
Of the Evil One;
For he is to you
An avowed enemy.

Mr. FRUTOS VAESKEN (Paraguay) (interpretation from Spanish): First of all, permit me to express to you, Sir, my congratulations and best wishes on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly in its work at the forty-seventh session. We are sure that under your intelligent guidance, our endeavours will achieve the results we all desire.

Also at the outset, allow me to extend to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations, cordial greetings from the Government and the people of the Republic of Paraguay, and to express our commitment to support him at all times in the difficult task of leading this Organization in its efforts for peace and international security.

In welcoming the admission to membership of the United Nations of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan,

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, we hail the triumph of freedom and of mankind's universal desire to live in peace and democracy, while retaining the individual's own identity. Ancient banners have come to wave proudly again over their homelands.

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

A new order is emerging in our universe. On the one hand, we see the rebirth of old nationalisms. On the other, we see plans for the integration of countries which are seeking, by this means, the right direction for achieving better economic development and trying to find, as in the case of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), the proper response to the requirements of their peoples for a better quality of life.

The integration of our countries - Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay - through MERCOSUR is something more than a mere strategy for development: it is a commitment of peoples with the same origin, with common cultural, historical, linguistic and religious identities, to share the common destiny of nations that were born in a territory of equality and hope.

The timetable for our fledgling integration process is being met. The Las Leñas meeting of Presidents on 26 and 27 June 1992 approved and is implementing a programme of measures which sets out a process of alleviating and eliminating customs duties and non-tariff barriers and of requiring the gradual coordination of macroeconomic and sectoral policies. The recent signing of an agreement with the European Community is an important element of extraregional cooperation for MERCOSUR.

As part of this same commitment to integration, Paraguay is moving ahead with the necessary legal instruments for making better uses of the Paraguay-Paran waterway. This communications link, which has the support of the Organization and other international communities, is designed to be one of the major river transport routes and an effective instrument for development by the MERCOSUR countries and our sister Republic of Bolivia.*

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* Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

The danger of a nuclear conflagration that would jeopardize the very existence of mankind has disappeared. Common sense and moral values have prevailed. Today there are very few cases of armed confrontation in the world. Never, perhaps, in its history has mankind enjoyed so much peace as now. But history has not come to an end: hunger, disease, lack of education, intolerance and prejudice continue to affect most parts of the world. If we love liberty, if we love democracy, we must find a solution to these problems. No state of politics can endure when people do not have the minimum they need for a life of dignity. If there is no tolerance, there will be hatred and resentment. If there is no education, the future of the world cannot be certain.

Now is the time for continental solidarity. Now is the time for doing away with prejudices and egoism. Now that the arms race is over, it would seem that the most powerful countries are preparing for another war, the economic war. Alliances are forming; they are trying to improve their competitiveness. The winner will be the one who produces and sells the most, without regard to the social cost, without regard to the fact that the products of the less developed countries are contantly losing value and that as a result it is more and more difficult for them to achieve development. The expectations the developing countries had for free trade are being blocked by the barriers of protectionism set up by the industrialized countries, which, paradoxically, are proclaiming the triumph of the free market.

We need to seek solutions that will alleviate the tragedy of the countries suffering the scourge of poverty. We are confident that, thanks to the welcome initiative of Chile in calling for the holding of a summit conference for social development, this will be a suitable opportunity for achieving world planning to promote the development of the poorest countries.

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

The hatred, the intolerance and the constant violation of human rights in former Yugoslavia, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in Somalia remind us that the battle for peace has not ended. Peace is a gift, and its preservation requires constant work. Paraguay will support in the strongest possible terms any action by the Security Council designed to seek a final solution to this grave situation, as indeed we voted in favour of resolution 46/242 of the General Assembly. Exacerbated nationalisms, racisms, religious hatreds and prejudices must disappear from the world if it wants to be more fraternal and humane.

We are regarding with particular interest the continuation of negotiations to find a final solution to the Palestine question. It is our hope that these talks will contribute positively towards finding a peaceful and negotiated, final and lasting solution which would provide, as we have already said, for the right of the State of Israel to live in peace within its own borders and the right of the Palestinian people to its own homeland.

The United Nations has lent its assitance to the peace process in South Africa through the Security Council. It is now up to the Government and the opposition to find appropriate solutions which provide, courageously and realistically, for the possibility of coexistence in a climate of peace, justice and security.

As the United Nations enters the new world order that is the fruit of East-West détente, its structure and agenda must be reorganized. Social development and the maintenance of peace must be its major concerns. It will be vital for it to find appropriate machinery to fulfil these aims, and for it to have the unreserved support of those who can provide their decisive cooperation.

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

The "Agenda for Peace" proposed by the Secretary-General deserves all our support: it could be the starting point for the search for new structures and new paths towards lasting and constructive peace.

We believe, along with the Rio Group, that international peace and security will be truly guaranteed only in so far as the underlying causes of conflicts are eliminated. We therefore reaffirm the vital importance of economic and social development in the process of consolidating peace. The gap reflected in the disparity in wealth between the North and the South must be narrowed if we want to avoid a chain reaction of unsatisfied needs leading to profound crises in developing countries, with the danger of returning to systems which we have abandoned and which have caused our peoples so much suffering.

We cannot talk about a future of peace or of sustained development without total respect for human rights. The dissemination of these rights and their constant observance is also a task for the United Nations. Respect for human rights must underpin any process of change. Hence, we welcome the World Conference on Human Rights, to be held in June 1993 in Vienna, and are pleased at the timeliness of its convening.

Flagrant violations of human rights, such as terrorism, still persist. Once and for all we must accept that terrorism is on of the most serious violations, attacking as it does fundamental human rights such as the rights to life, security and patrimony.

Just a few days ago, in this very Hall, we were moved by the words of the President of Colombia about the battle being waged by his people and Government against drug trafficking. Murder, extortion, kidnapping and corruption all have their roots in the traffic in drugs. Magistrates, civil

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servants and anyone opposed to this criminal traffic are under constant threat, and many have paid for their ideals, their courage and their dignity with their lives.

We agree with stress laid by the President of Colombia on the responsibility of the major consuming centres, and on countries' obligation to participate in a total war against drug trafficking. As the President said, we must have determined, collective international and multilateral action to combat this scourge on all fronts.

Five hundred years ago, the imagination and daring of Columbus ushered in a new era. America, a continent of hope, was incorporated into the adventure of mankind, and it was destined to have a profound effect on the future. Today, as a coincidence, the world is entering into a new stage that is also promising and full of hope. It is for this generation to consolidate the future, and for our Organization to ensure that there is peace and to promote social development.

To mark the quincentenary, the countries of Ibero-America met last year in Guadalajara, Mexico, determined to make the strength of our community count in the future. The response was positive, and at the second summit of Heads of State and of Government of Ibero-America, held this year in Madrid, effective projects designed to help the Ibero-American peoples were approved.

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

Joint efforts such as those we have mentioned and those promised in the Americas Initiative, as well as the solidarity and support that my country has received from other countries such as Japan and Germany, give us hope for a future of concerted effort for the development of those who need it most.

In the course of this year, my country attended the Earth Summit in Rio, eager to add its efforts to those of the other countries committed to preserving the environment. We announced measures adopted in this area, such as the declaration as a protected ecological zone of an area covering about 60,000 hectares of woods, with an indigenous population and natural fauna. But what is more, we are currently studying a draft project for the development of the western region of my country, with the support of the European Community, paying particular attention to the preservation of the environment in an area of more than 240,000 square kilometres, which represents more than half of our territory.

The Rio Conference made it possible for the whole world to become more aware of the relationship between development and the environment. It will be difficult to achieve lasting success in the endeavour of bringing about sustainable development of the Earth if the countries that bear the major responsibility for polluting the planet do not make available the necessary resources.

The process of democratization in Latin America in this new era was, in a sense, what triggered the liberation movements in other parts of the world. Today, in America, with a few exceptions, Governments enjoy a legitimacy conferred upon them by free and unchallenged elections. The last flickers of violence are dying out, and peoples are living in freedom and democracy, with respect for human rights.

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

The civil war in El Salvador is now history. That country, together with Honduras, has set an example for the international community by taking its international conflicts to the International Court of Justice for settlement.

Peru is once again taking the path of restoring its constitution. In November, it will be holding constituent elections with the participation, at its request, of an observer mission from the Organization of American States. We hope that Peru will find solutions to the grave problems it is confronting and that we will shortly be able to welcome it back to the Rio Group.

The Rio Group showed that it is a reliable mechanism for political consultation and cooperation, as it demonstrated when the crisis which endangered the constitution of Venezuela occurred and when it sent a delegation which took an active part in seeking to restore full democracy in Peru.

Furthermore, through the Rio Group, meetings were held and a treaty of cooperation with the European Community was signed, and meetings were also held with countries of the Persian Gulf, Japan, China and Canada.

The process of regional integration, whose ultimate objective is that of creating a vast common economic zone throughout the American continent, has, in addition to MERCOSUR, made great progress in the form of the Andean Pact, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and, first and foremost, the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), which is a blueprint for integration that has already been agreed upon by the United States of America and by Mexico and Canada. On behalf of my country, I should like to extend my congratulations and best wishes for success to those countries.

(Mr. Frutos Vaesken, Paraguay)

Permit me to speak to you, however briefly, about Paraguay, my own country, which was reborn to democracy and recovered its freedom just four years ago. Our President, Andres Rodriguez, in this very Hall, addressing the General Assembly during the forty-fourth session, said:

"Paraguay has set its feet firmly on the path of political democracy." (A/44/PV.6, p. 21)

Today I can say, with legitimate pride, that the Government of Paraguay is keeping its promise. My country is living in a legitimate, genuine and fruitful democracy based on boundless respect for human rights and fundamental human freedoms.

A new national Constitution, effective since 20 June 1992, is now governing the destiny of my country. This is the result of a democratic debate in a constituent national convention elected by popular will in free elections with the participation of all political forces, and was observed by members of international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental.

In the economic and social realm, my country has continued to make progress in consolidating its economy through the process of adjustment and stabilization. We have liberalized trade, and we are giving priority attention to regional integration.

Our whole policy of consolidating democracy, accompanied by the necessary process of stabilizing the economy and finances, has been made possible by the determination of the Paraguayan people, who made clear to their rulers that in their country there is no longer room for dictatorship or totalitarianism.

But just as the Paraguayan people have become the masters of their new democratic and free destiny, we must recognize the determined support of the international community for our process of democratic consolidation and

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economic and financial stabilization. In particular, we should like to thank the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the European Community for their cooperation and confidence.

In conclusion, a few words about the United Nations. As it reaches what we might term the first stage of its existence, the balance sheet is favorable. Its work for peace has been effective. The near-unanimous opinion in recommending structural changes to strengthen it and to endow it with greater dynamism has as its sole cause the profound changes occurring in the world, which call for an Organization more in keeping with new requirements. To preserve peace will continue to be its principal task, but with a more responsive structure that will help reduce the causes of conflict. The whole world, longing as it does for a future of liberty, justice, peace and security, has placed its trust in the United Nations and its effectiveness.

Mr. NATCHABA (Togo) (interpretation from French): The euphoria and enthusiasm that greeted, no so long ago, the disappearance of ideological East-West confrontation and the progressive expansion of freedom and democracy are today giving way to general discouragement because of the obstacles to the natural aspirations of peoples to freedom and legitimate well-being.

The forty-seventh session of the General Assembly has begun at a particularly difficult time in the history of humankind, which means that Mr. Ganev has assumed the presidency of the Assembly in a context of disquiet, but also one that is hopeful, because in all likelihood only our Organization can help the world to meet these challenges.

On behalf of the delegation of Togo, we wish to convey to Mr. Ganev heartfelt congratulations on his election to the presidency of this session. The selection of Mr. Ganev, who possesses such great intellectual qualities

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and experience, is for his country the true embodiment of the ideals of peace and justice that it constantly advocates. We will be available at all times to work with him to ensure the success of his daunting mission.

The delegation of Togo wishes to pay well-deserved tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Shihabi, for his outstanding performance in conducting the work of the forty-sixth session. His dynamism, his high standards of excellence and his zeal for punctuality compelled our admiration and accounted for the great success of our deliberations. I reiterate our sincere congratulations to him.

We take this occasion to salute the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the dynamic work that he has undertaken since his election to the head of our Organization. The serious-mindedness and pragmatism he has demonstrated since taking office in January of this year lead us to believe that the United Nations will be able to make an even greater contribution to the maintenance of peace throughout the world and the promotion of solidarity among nations.

(Mr. Natchaba, Togo)

In recent months, the family of the United Nations has grown with the addition of new Members. We wish to bid them welcome and to say how proud and happy the international community is to welcome them to our midst, with the hope that in keeping with the statements they made upon admission to membership they will espouse the San Francisco Charter in its entirety and will comply with its fundamental principles.

Since the end of the last session, many events have marked the world. Efforts have been stepped up to build a new world order which must before all else be liberal, because it is based on the absolute need to respect human rights, which is a fundamental requirement for the establishment of relations of trust, peace and solidarity among peoples of our planet.

The turmoil we have witnessed throughout the world, particularly in Europe, Asia and Africa in recent years, reflects the resolve of peoples to gain new freedom within which man can become the unchallenged artisan of his Government's destiny. Throughout the world, peoples are seeking freedom, peace and justice that only proper multipartite democracy can guarantee. Among these are the people of Togo, which for 13 years has been persevering in the effort to adapt the structures and the basic choices governing its socio-political context to meet the needs of our time and changing attitudes.

Having broken with the previous regime and gained a constitution in 1979, our country resolutely committed itself to implementing measures of liberalization, détente and progressive democratization of our political life. These measures inter alia made it possible to hold free elections under the second and third legislatures and during municipal and prefectoral referenda of 1987, at the same time as they strengthened protection of human rights, particularly by setting up an independent commission.

(Mr. Natchaba, Togo)

The subsequent adoption of laws relating to the liberalization of the press, political pluralism and general amnesty, along with the development of a draft constitution to establish a multipartite regime, shows that already in the middle of 1991 the Government and the people of Togo truly desired to move on, without undue haste, to a higher stage in the process of democratizing our institutions.

The tremendous speed of this movement that was started in the late 1980s culminated with the National Sovereign Conference of the living forces of the nation, which led to the transitional Government which was to lead Togo to elections and establish democracy.

We must state that one year after the establishment of these transitional institutions the Government has faced enormous difficulties, and that tremendous efforts must be made before we attain our goals.

The recent adjustment of the machinery of the institutions of this transition, proposed following the consultation meeting between the various protagonists of political life and endorsed by the Government and the legislature, the High Council of the Republic, overwhelmingly demonstrate the desire of the people of Togo to do everything possible to achieve peace and security, a State of law that they all sincerely want to see, by establishing new institutions through free and dependable democratic elections. The latest of these, the Presidential elections, are to end on 20 December of this year.

This recent adaptation of the workings of this transitional Government meets the needs of our march forward, both by ensuring proper application of the constitution for this transitional period, so that no organ be unjustly deprived of its constitutional prerogatives, and by involving in the democratic process all national political leaders to rally consensus around the values underpinning our democratic renewal.

(Mr. Natchaba, Togo)

These bodies have sufficient power to lead the country to this irreversible democratic peace process, but they do not have enough power to block our march to democracy. Accordingly we can only express satisfaction that the two senior officials of the executive branch, the President and the Prime Minister, have solemnly proclaimed their determination to continue to its end the democratic process that is under way and to devote all their energy to organizing referenda set by the electoral timetable. It is at this stage in our apprenticeship of democracy that the new Government of National Union of Transition, formed by the Prime Minister together with the Head of State and after consultations with the large political families, was approved on 14 September by a majority of 60 per cent by the High Council of the Republic and following a secret ballot.

Very revealing indeed of the resolve of the people of Togo to overcome its contradictions in order to promote democratic renewal, this vote of approval, cast in a particularly difficult context, sufficiently demonstrates "that in Togo, whatever might be said, we can still say no in full freedom and without any fear of a proposal from the executive power".

We take this opportunity to inform this Assembly that the draft constitution of the Fourth Republic, submitted to referendum on Sunday 27 September 1992, was adopted by 99.09 per cent. The referendum met with great enthusiasm and almost unanimous support, with a participation rate of nearly 75 per cent. The Government will not fail to learn the lesson from this first vote to correct the mistakes revealed in the first referendum. This is a guarantee for the acceptance of ballot results by all parties.

It is appropriate to reiterate to our friendly countries and to the United Nations, as well as to the entire international community, the profound

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gratitude of the Government and the people of Togo for the invaluable support they have given to our democratic process. We sincerely hope that this assistance will be continued throughout the coming elections.

It is undeniable that the struggle to establish a State of law in Togo is a job that falls essentially to the people of Togo themselves, and that they bear the primary responsibility for fashioning their democracy, according to the means they have and in keeping with their culture and their national spirit. With courage and determination, we will strive to meet the challenge in union and mutual acceptance.

In keeping with the conclusions of the work of the joint commission, the Government has set up a security plan the results of which can already be seen in the field.

(Mr. Natchaba, Togo)

Thanks to this consensus, political violence, which until recently was rampant in my country, is now being stemmed throughout Togo. All political parties will have access, without restriction and with complete security, to all parts of Togo during their political campaigns.

Management by consensus in this short period of our political life is without any doubt the driving force behind political détente in Togo and a guarantee of the reliability and transparency of the coming elections.

Finally, the major protagonists of our political life have agreed to the principle of mutual guarantees, whose importance is clear to all. We must implement all the measures that we have decided on before, during and after the elections. Our country, determined to restore peace and tranquillity, assures the Assembly that the democratic process under way is irreversible.

Despite our hope that we can live from now on in an international society without conflict, the world continues to witness a growth of armed conflict. It is no longer merely Africa and Asia that contain pockets of tension. Europe, with war raging in the former Yugoslavia - more precisely, in Bosnia and Herzegovina - is now affected. That tragedy challenges the international community to do all it can to ensure respect for man and human dignity. We unreservedly support all the European initiatives and salute the laudable efforts of the United Nations to restore peace to that part of Europe.

Elsewhere in the world, in Africa for some years now Somalia and Liberia have been two more hotbeds of tension where fratricidal war rages, already claiming thousands of victims. Death, desolation, poverty and hunger are the daily lot of these peoples.

From this United Nations rostrum we call upon our Somali and Liberian brothers to demonstrate positive nationalism and constructive patriotism to

(Mr. Natchaba, Togo)

help implement the relevant resolutions of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to contribute to restoring peace to their respective countries.

The South African Government must understand that the wheels of history are still turning and that it is now clear that structures imposed by force cannot survive the determination of the people to live in peace. The continued plight of that part of our continent demands that the General Assembly intensify its efforts for victory in the fight to eradicate apartheid. This requires that all forms of pressure be maintained to compel the De Klerk Government to commit itself fully to the political and institutional reforms that it has already courageously undertaken.

Togo is following with particular interest the developing situation in the Middle East. It reiterates its full support for the peace process started in October 1991 in Madrid, and calls upon the parties to demonstrate greater wisdom, courage and restraint in order to strengthen that process and bring about a final solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. It should be based on a negotiated agreement acceptable to all, guaranteeing the security of all the States of the region, including Israel, within secure, internationally recognized borders, and allowing the Palestinian people freely and fully to exercise their right to self-determination.

With regard to the Arab-Persian Gulf, where peace still seems to be threatened, my country reiterates its appeal to all the States of the region scrupulously to abide by the various relevant resolutions of the Security Council, and to make every effort to avoid the risk of new confrontations which still hovers over that part of the world.*

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* Mr. Holo (Benin), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Natchaba, Togo)

In Asia, Togo appreciates the Secretary-General's efforts to deploy the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC). We hope that the national reconciliation effort now going on will gain further ground.

Because of the great suffering they inflict on peoples, the conflicts to which I have referred render sterile any notion of sovereignty and independence. Is it not better, then, to prevent armed conflicts rather than seek to resolve them?

Efforts made throughout the world by regional and international organizations in the search for new machinery to prevent war and maintain peace are likely to promote social progress and to establish better living conditions for our peoples. Accordingly, my delegation welcomes the fact that the Security Council on 31 January 1992 held a Summit meeting which considered ways of strengthening and making more efficient the United Nations capacity for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping. Togo very much appreciates the conclusions of that meeting and the report (A/47/277) submitted by the Secretary-General at the Council's request.

In dealing with the many conflicts raging throughout the world, preventive diplomacy would allow, with real determination by the protagonists of international life, particularly the parties to a conflict, the speedy attainment of its goal of peace.

The world is now witnessing the end of East-West antagonism, but the much feared danger of a world war has not yet been overcome. Arsenals of highly sophisticated weapons still exist throughout the world, posing serious threats to international peace and security. There is an urgent need to destroy weapons of mass destruction and halt the arms race; the military Powers should devote themselves to that task in order to curb any reflex action to have recourse to war.

(Mr. Natchaba, Togo)

The Non-Proliferation Treaty has been renewed without time-limit and the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) have entered into force. The final text of the convention banning chemical weapons will be submitted for our consideration this session. All these developments increase the international community's hope that the military Powers will embark on general and complete disarmament.

Furthermore, with the end of the cold war, and with distrust now giving way to trust and cooperation, the delegation of Togo believes that it is time for the international community to envisage drafting, without delay, a comprehensive test-ban treaty, after which the United Nations would play a leading role as the main body where consensus can be forged on security and disarmament problems.

We welcome the recent initiative of President Francois Mitterrand in unilaterally decreeing a one-year moratorium on nuclear tests by his country.

(Mr. Natchaba, Togo)

We also welcome the statement made on 2 July 1992 by President George Bush on repatriating certain tactical nuclear weapons of the United States with a view to destroying them.

As we see it, recent events and initiatives, as well as many positive world developments in the disarmament field, are encouraging. However, the proliferation and international transfer of conventional weapons, particularly in Africa, are a source of major concern on the part of the authorities of Togo. In this respect, we believe that a United Nations regional centre for peace and disarmament, like the one in Lomé, is still useful and we should seek to increase its role, its powers and the scope of its activities. The United Nations should give the regional centres greater means so that they could fully participate in the strengthening of security and peace.

Serious problems such as the ones connected with the maintenance of international peace and security persist, and this absolutely dictates the exploration of new approaches that could lead to a strengthening of the ability of the United Nations to act. While the East-West confrontation paralysed the Organization as it tried to carry out its noble mission, the current détente seems to offer greater opportunities now to Member States to reaffirm their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter. For its part our country reiterates its faith in the United Nations and adheres to the mechanisms for establishing preventive diplomacy and restoring and maintaining peace. However, the efficient functioning of the United Nations presupposes restructuring its organs and adapting them to contemporary facts.

The promotion of democracy and human rights means today that the fate of mankind as a whole in the special and delicate field of the maintenance of international peace and security should not be left to the discretion of only

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a few States. The management of peace and security requires the concerted action of States as a whole, whatever their geographical size or their economic, financial or military power. Consequently, Togo unreservedly supports any proposal to revise the composition of the Security Council. If that were done, the democratic revolution going on in States will finally have reached international organizations.

Peace and democracy presuppose the existence of a viable economy capable of meeting the vital needs of food, health, training and housing. The progress that needs to be made for man's full development is essential for democracy and its consolidation. It is a basic truth that there can be no development without democracy, just as one cannot conceive of democracy without development or peace.

In order to safeguard peace in the world we must commit ourselves fully to the idea of a fairer division of the riches of the Earth. But we must note, with regret, that the international situation has not changed in this respect.

At the end of this century an analysis of the international economic situation points up many social inequalities between nations. The hopes we had at the end of the cold war should find their justification in a partnership between rich countries and developing countries so that the appetites of some do not cause starvation in others. Unfortunately, we look on, powerless, as the gap between rich and poor grows ever wider.

The economies of the developing countries are in a state of chronic recession, the most serious in several decades. Growth has slowed, particularly in Africa, where the crisis has fundamentally affected all aspects of life, and a real deterioration of living conditions has resulted in

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these countries. It is clear that this situation will continue unless efforts are made to establish a new world economic order based on fairness and a more generous humanistic vision of international cooperation. In this respect, we very much appreciate the decision taken by Japan to make available to Africa an aid package of $700 million spread out over the next three years. This action, and other measures too, although encouraging are far from meeting the real concerns of the developing countries, in particular the least developed of them.

Indeed, if these countries are to break out of the profound crisis, urgent and appropriate action must be taken by the international community to guarantee remunerative prices for commodities and to dismantle tariff barriers, which are obstacles to the exports of these countries. It is vital that the international community mobilize larger resources to relaunch investment and that it find a lasting solution to the debt problem. Appropriate mechanisms must be found to make it possible to reimburse and generate resources to ensure economic recovery.

The economic crises of our countries have social consequences that particularly affect young people. Juvenile delinquency, illicit drug-trafficking, drug abuse and the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) are serious threats for mankind. Constant attention should be focused on them.

Sustainable and lasting economic and social development is impossible unless there is a healthy environment. Fortunately, today the international community has mobilized to solve the problems caused by the deterioration of the Earth and of nature.

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We are living in a new era today. This new era should be based on freedom, understanding, and love of one's neighbour and of peace. Guaranteeing peace and security, working for freedom and democracy, ensuring world prosperity through free international trade, preserving a healthy environment and creating stable international relations based on dialogue and cooperation: all these, among others, are challenges that should be met by the United Nations in order to establish the new world order that we all sincerely wish to see. Therefore we must give of our very best to attain these goals.

We hope that the twenty-first century will give us a world in which man, freed from the plight of poverty, oppression, tyranny and destitution, can use all his faculties and give free rein to his creativity in order to achieve his own full development and the social and economic development of the State as the guarantor of peace and security.

Mr. MENENDEZ PARK (Guatemala) (interpretation from Spanish): Allow me, Sir, to congratulate Mr. Ganev on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session and to assure him that he will have the full cooperation of my delegation in the discharge of his important task.

I should like also to congratulate Mr. Samir Shihabi of Saudi Arabia on the efficient manner in which he discharged his duties as President of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

I extend fraternal and cordial greetings to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who, as Secretary-General, has headed the Organization since the beginning of the year. We realize that during this initial stage he has had a difficult task. He has undertaken the job of restructuring and reforming the system to adapt the Organization to the new international context.

In this joint effort, in which mankind has placed its highest hopes for a better and more just future, it is positive and comforting to have new friends in our midst. In that spirit, I extend the warmest welcome to the nations that joined the Organization this year. Guatemala offers them its friendship, respect, solidarity and cooperation.

The nations of the world are gathered in this forum with mixed feelings of uncertainty and hope - uncertainty because, following the dramatic changes in the international order, we find ourselves on the eve of a new era, whose fundamental features have yet to be defined; hope because, despite a history of sterile confrontations, an opportunity is opening up for a just and equitable international order in which cooperation between nations would be geared to the solution of the fundamental problems of the international community: extreme poverty, sustainable development, peace, security and the environment.

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We Guatemalans view these changes with great hope, and we fully understand their historic implications, as our country too is involved in a far-reaching and ambitious process of transformation, which we trust will positively change the course of our history. Guatemala is making great efforts to overcome the confrontation that, for years, has riven our society and afflicted thousands of Guatemalan families.

Others took advantage of the problems of our political and economic development to transplant their hostilities to our soil. Therefore, for more than 30 years our country was involved in foreign and alien confrontation that left only suffering in its wake and led to neglect of the central problems of our society.

As a small country, Guatemala suffered from the ups and downs of an international system based on ideological confrontation. As was the case on a world-wide scale, economic resources necessary to give impetus to the process of our people's socio-economic well-being were earmarked to finance a sterile and cruel confrontation. The attention of the various sectors of our society was distracted from genuine questions of development and obfuscated by an ideological polemic whose outcome was violence and stagnation. Problems of hunger, education, social well-being, health and poverty are among those that were left unattended and unsolved throughout these irretrievably lost decades.

The whole Central American region found itself in a similar situation - so much so that it became the focus of international attention as a result of internal armed clashes and military tensions. As a region, however, we have been able to take our historic destiny in hand and, by an approach that we ourselves designed, often in the face of the scepticism of people who thought

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us unable to solve our problems other than on the basis of external formulas, have managed to overcome the spiral of violence and, at the same time, initiate a process of democratization and pacification, which is now bearing fruit and is transforming our nations with the promise of a better future for our peoples.

As Central Americans, we Guatemalans are aware that the challenge of our future is entirely in our own hands. The process of democratization, begun some years ago, is the start of a much broader process - one aimed at transforming our social, economic and cultural structures and at securing the well-being of all Guatemalans. The effort that is needed to generate a process of overall improvement in the standards of living of our people requires that the funds used for armed confrontation be reallocated for social investment.

President Serrano Elias Lanzo, at the beginning of his administration in 1991, launched a peace plan for the whole nation, conscious of the fact that progress towards democratization of the country is the only means of achieving even higher goals. Under this plan, peace is conceived of as a source of the basic conditions that will allow for the harmonious development of the individual in society and for peaceful and respectful coexistence between people, rather than simply as the absence of violence or the ending of internal armed confrontation.

In this framework, the Government of the Republic has begun a dialogue with the URNG with the aim of securing an end to the internal conflict and of involving the groups taking part in it so that, within the constitutional framework of the State's laws, they will renounce the use of arms and participate in the political life of the country in a constructive rather than a destructive manner.

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Unfortunately, the pace of the initial talks was slowed by unconstructive attitudes on the part of the representatives of the insurgents, attitudes that can be understood only as an attempt artificially to delay the peace process and thus to gain special benefits not justified by the realities on the ground. The Government's goodwill has been shown by its acceptance of an agreement on human rights proposed by the conciliator who presides over the National Commission for the Reconciliation of Guatemala. The insurgents have not accepted this proposal.

The Government of Guatemala deplores and rejects this delaying approach which results in unnecessary prolongation of the sufferings of Guatemalans and limits the possibilities of action by the Government to deal with the real problems of the people who elected it. We appeal to the international community to condemn these delaying tactics, support the continuation of negotiations and appeal to the insurgents to adopt a positive and realistic attitude.

The Government of the Republic trusts that in the next meetings with the mediation of the Conciliator and the participation of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, these obstacles will be overcome and the talks will continue in order soon to reach the complete peace for which all Guatemalans yearn.

The transformation of Guatemalan society, however, goes well beyond putting an end to internal armed confrontation. For this reason my Government has developed important initiatives aimed at substantively modifying some of the structures of our society. Central to these efforts is the decision to put on a solid footing a State where the rule of law is paramount, guaranteeing the effective administration of justice for all citizens, without discrimination.

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A renewed and revitalized State under the rule of law, guaranteeing fully effective human rights, is the central aim of the Administration of President Serrano Elias. In that context, important achievements have been made, perhaps the most important being the restoration, through a struggle against impunity, of the individual's trust in democratic institutions.

The Government is aware that much remains to be done in order to ensure fully effective human rights, but we believe that it must be recognized that over the past two years important advances have been made in this respect.

At the same time, significant efforts are being made to create conditions that will permit the return to their homeland of refugees who have gone to other countries, fleeing the violence that affected their population groups in the past. The National Peace Fund (FONAPAZ) and the National Land Fund (FONATIERRA), both created by the present Government, are participating jointly with the Special Commission for Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons (CEAR) in creating conditions appropriate not only for the return of refugees but also for the effective reintegration of returnees and displaced persons into society, providing them with conditions to engage in productive activity that will allow for their social and human development.

I have taken the liberty of drawing attention to some of the important aspects of my country's internal politics in order to give the background to the points that I shall now make concerning the international scene and our foreign policy.

Guatemala has followed with close attention the important world developments of recent years. We are certainly witnessing the formation of a new international order, which springs from the ashes of a confrontational and bipolar world. We should take advantage of the new international environment

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to seek peaceful solutions to conflicts and confrontations that still persist, and thus allow the Governments concerned to apply to development and peace resources formerly earmarked for financing those confrontations.

At the same time the dividends of world peace should be channelled to investment for the social well-being of peoples. Nuclear disarmament, a major goal in itself, should also be used to generate a surplus with which to finance programmes to resolve the most serious world problems - hunger, disease, illiteracy and poverty. The new climate of confidence among nations and new patterns of global security should be based not only on an absence of immediate military threats, but on real efforts to resolve the central problems of mankind.

More than ever before, we have a historic opportunity today to make significant advances towards the creation of a truly just world order, based on cooperation, not domination. To achieve this, however, we need above all to recognize the errors affecting the international system and to establish new rules permitting truly harmonious coexistence.

It is necessary to carry out promptly an exhaustive, in-depth revision of relations between the developed and the developing nations. There are enormous imbalances which if present trends continue will lead to a deepening gap between the two.

The industrialized countries and the developing countries must jointly agree on an agenda of matters that should be given priority attention by the international community and discuss and explore machinery and methods that will allow us better to face the challenge of development in all its aspects. The World Summit for Social Development gives us the opportunity to discuss these problems at the highest level.

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Multilateralism has taken on a renewed and vigorous impetus in the task of building a new world order. The importance of multilateral forums as centres of discussion, analysis and the adoption of generalized policies for the international system is a significant opportunity for developing nations to participate actively in the process of constituting the new rules of the international system.

The experience gained in organizing approaches that allowed us to formulate proposals and present our interests to the industrialized nations, at a time when ideological confrontation relegated our countries' fundamental problems to the background, should be used to advantage today to ensure that the international agenda suitably reflects our interests and needs.

However, those interests and perspectives will be reflected in international forums only to the degree that we fight for it. To that end, South-South cooperation is a fundamental vehicle and the efforts to achieve coordination between developing nations should be stepped up.

In Guatemala's view, the world order that emerges from the transformations under way should be built upon deep respect for the norms and principles of international law. The possibility of harmonious, stable coexistence between the nations of the world depends on unconditional respect for States' sovereignty, independence and equality before the law. Therefore, the international community must reject any State's attempt to extend the application of its own laws beyond its own borders.

Within the context of the emerging world order, encouraging efforts are now under way to reach a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict. Those encouraging deeds are in contrast to the tragic events taking place in the former Yugoslavia and the equally tragic situation prevailing in Somalia.

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The international community must renew its efforts to find peaceful, negotiated solutions in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

My country has viewed with great interest the measures taken by the Secretary-General to adapt the United Nations for the better fulfilment of its functions, and we support all efforts that enable the Organization to attain the objectives of the Charter.

In particular, I wish to emphasize the active role the Organization has taken in peace-keeping in various regions of the world. In the resolution of conflicts that originated before the end of the cold war and in cases of new tensions emerging from the geopolitical processes resulting from that historic development, the peace-keeping forces under the flag of the United Nations carry out a fundamental role by opening the way to truce, dialogue and negotiation, thus preventing the prolongation of confrontations that can be satisfactorily resolved by peaceful means.

We should, however, re-examine the criteria used in financing those forces. The cost of peace-keeping operations could prove overwhelming for both the Organization and its Member States, especially those, like Guatemala, that have limited resources. In this regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's report "An Agenda for Peace" as a contribution to those efforts.

Along the same lines, there is no doubt about the need to reform structures that emerged and functioned within the framework of a confrontational order. Such reform should not be limited, however, to the mere streamlining of the bureaucracy, but should aspire to the creation of a system that ensures satisfactory representation for all its members. As part of those efforts, we should deal without delay with the composition of the

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Security Council of the Organization. The current structure and procedures of the Council are the result of a political order that we have left far behind, and we need to revise them, adapt them to the current situation and prevent the creation of patterns of political tutelage that go against the principles of equitable participation and juridical equality among States.

In fact, a new problem is beginning to take shape within the structure of the Organization, and it is nothing more or less than the reflection of a global issue: the privileged position enjoyed by some nations encourages monopolistic structures in various multilateral forums.

The United Nations will be an effective and efficient forum to the extent that each and every one of its Members can feel that its interests are adequately represented in the policies and programmes of the various departments of the Organization. Attitudes of political and economic tutelage will be very unlikely to strengthen it; nor will they facilitate the establishment of international patterns of cooperation.

We believe that in the protection and promotion of human rights we have a clear example of such a situation. At this time Guatemala has the advisory services of an expert adviser from the United Nations, who has received a broad mandate from the Commission on Human Rights to assist my country in its efforts to achieve the full realization of human rights. The mandate has been accepted by my Government in the spirit of openness and cooperation that it has maintained in dealing with the Commission.

In addition, my country also unreservedly supports the United Nations objective of promoting those rights internationally and will continue to cooperate with all its organs in that task.

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At the same time, we feel we must express our concern at what we see as the application of apparently selective criteria by some members of the Commission on Human Rights in its work.

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Nevertheless, disturbing phenomena such as xenophobia, racism, discrimination against migrant workers and ethnic and religious discrimination, which have become more acute in recent years in certain nations as a result of the changing international system, have not been given sufficient attention by the Committee during its recent deliberations.

From the work of the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, it would appear that it is only in some developing countries that one finds obstacles to the full application of human rights, disregarding the serious problems that exist in other nations. In both of these forums, it would appear that the credibility of democratic, freely elected Governments is being questioned, giving greater validity to the arguments presented by politically compromised organizations that favor sectarian movements which seek, through the use of force and by causing suffering to peoples, to alter lawful democratic institutions.

It is urgent and necessary that the Committee dealing with Non-Governmental Organizations engage in a review of the non-governmental organizations that cooperate in the work of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and that participate in particular in the work of the Commission on Human Rights, in order to ensure that their participation is positive and does not answer to sectarian political interests that might tend to discredit them.

At the same time, it is necessary to review the working procedures of both forums so that organizations that participate as observers will not receive preferential treatment over that of members of the Organization who are not on the Committee.

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The Government of Guatemala will continue to cooperate with the United Nations in the field of human rights, and we hope in this respect to continue to receive the advisory services that enable the Government to fulfil the commitment of President Serrano Elias to promote the full enjoyment of human rights in our country. However, I appeal to the relevant organizations to guard against abuse of this spirit of openness and cooperation by groups seeking the destabilization of the State, an unjust and selective situation that would ultimately oblige the Government to review, analyse and reformulate its position on these matters.

The World Conference on Human Rights, to be held next year, should provide an opportunity to examine the present situation and to plan the Organization's future policies in a matter that is of pivotal importance to the well-being of humankind.

We are in the process of analysing, proposing and establishing a new world order based on cooperation and coexistence. The new role that falls to the United Nations implies growing functions of coordination and discussion between nations. To that end, the principle of universality should prevail over other interests.

In this context, the Republic of China (Taiwan), one of the largest economies in the world, is in a position to contribute significantly to seeking solutions to problems that nations of the world must face. Its presence in the United Nations would strengthen our Organization and permit more appropriate treatment of topics with global implications, such as that of the environment. Consequently, Guatemala appeals for consideration of the need for participation by the Republic of China (Taiwan) as a Member of our Organization, in addition to the People's Republic of China. We believe,

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moreover, that this attitude would make a suitable contribution to the spirit of cooperation and conciliation that should characterize the new world order.

The structural reform undertaken by my Government includes a strategy for economic openness designed to bring our economy into the flow of international commerce.

In addition to the effort at integration in the Central American region, which we support with deep conviction and whose aim is to shape a community of nations in the Central American isthmus, Guatemala at this time is also negotiating its participation in various regional economic-integration programmes.

This strategy is in line with our conviction that more active and open participation in the international market is a central element in achieving economic growth and development for our population. We have signed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in the belief that eliminating barriers to international trade creates better opportunities for our economies.

However, we are concerned by the fact that the liberalizing theories originating in the industrialized nations are giving way to clearly protectionist attitudes precisely at a time when our products are becoming competitive in their markets. Rules and regulations are emerging as an excuse to prevent the inflow of commodities and manufactured products, upon which our countries' economies largely depend.

These attitudes can hardly provide a stimulus to trust and understanding, and they also give rise to questions about the sincerity of principles that are publicly proclaimed but only partially practised. However, we should not be thought of as ingenuous. We are aware of the fact that every country will promote its particular interests to the extent allowed by other nations. We

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are convinced, however, that for the sake of higher and more long-term interests, nations must set aside some of their more immediate and narrow interests. That concession should be general and reciprocal, however; otherwise dialogue becomes but a theoretical and sterile exercise.

The activity of our Organization and the contribution that Member States make to its work are aimed at improving the quality of life and promoting the overall development of human beings. That makes it imperative that we strengthen the mechanisms of cooperation among nations.

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This session of the General Assembly is being held on the eve of a new era in international relations, whose principal features are yet to be defined. I express the hope that we, the participants in the Assembly, will prove equal to the challenge posed by the future - peaceful coexistence and well-being for all mankind.

Mr. SEY (Gambia): The forty-seventh session of the General Assembly is being held at a particularly crucial moment, when our Organization will be called upon to demonstrate innovative thinking and flexibility in the face of the emerging challenges.

Against the background of the very important agenda that is before us, let me congratulate Mr. Ganev on his unanimous election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. I am confident that his professional competence and dynamism make him uniquely qualified to preside over the Assembly. I wish to assure him of my delegation's full support in carrying out his formidable task to a successful completion.

Let me also extend our heartfelt appreciation to his predecessor, Ambassador Samir Shihabi of Saudi Arabia, for the exemplary manner in which he conducted the deliberations of the forty-sixth session.

Permit me, on behalf of the Government of the Gambia and on my own behalf, to express our heartfelt congratulations to the new Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, whom I have had the honour and privilege of knowing for many years. As a distinguished scholar, an outstanding diplomat and a person of exceptional character, Mr. Boutros Boutro-Ghali has in him those very fine qualities of leadership that our Organization needs at this very crucial period of its history. We in Africa are indeed honoured to have one of our illustrious sons serve in this highly prestigious and important

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position. I am confident, and I am sure I am speaking for Africa and for all those who know Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, that he will live up to the very high expectations we all have of him. His long and distinguished career in the service of his country gives us reason for this trust.

I should also like to take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to his worthy predecessor, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, who during his tenure of office contributed greatly to the strengthening of the United Nations, allowing it to assume a lead role in promoting world peace and security. His indefatigable efforts in pursuit of an atmosphere of understanding for the solution of problems in different parts of the world are exemplary and deserve our very deep appreciation. I wish him a happy retirement.

The Gambia notes with great pleasure the admission of the Republics of Belarus, San Marino, Croatia, Slovenia, Uzbekistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan as new Members of the United Nations. I should like to welcome them and congratulate them on their accession to full membership of the United Nations. As they take their place in this comity of nations, it behoves each of us to extend to them the hand of friendship and support that characterizes this great Organization.

As we reflect on the activities of our Organization during the past 12 months, we are encouraged by the numerous actions and decisions that have been taken in support of world peace and progress. Certainly, problems continue to exist, and in some cases have increased in intensity and complexity, but the full commitment of our Organization to resolving them remains ever strong.

Other less conflictual but none the less important issues of concern to humanity have also received attention. I would like, in this respect, to refer to the historic Earth Summit, convened in Rio de Janeiro in June this

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year. This meeting, which brought together leaders from all over the world, marks the first major step taken by humanity to reflect upon and map out a strategy for the survival of all species on Earth. It marks the beginning of a more responsible attitude to the Earth and its resources. The Rio Declaration, the Agenda 21 programmes and the Conventions on climate change and bio-diversity all combine to lay the basis for a sustainable development.

We fully support the recommendations of the Conference and do hope that the various programmes of Agenda 21 will receive adequate support and financing to ensure their successful implementation. Of special interest to our countries is the recommendation to set up an intergovernmental negotiating committee to negotiate a convention on drought and desertification. We strongly urge the Assembly at this session to take the appropriate measures to allow the committee to commence its work as soon as possible.

This century has witnessed two world wars, which brought untold hardship and suffering to mankind. The creation of the United Nations immediately after the Second World War reflected the determination of the founding fathers to spare future generations the scourge of war. We all know the story of what followed. The cold war, with its debilitating effects on the capacity of the United Nations, as well as the consequences of the destructive conflicts it engendered, demonstrated the extent to which our dreams and hopes became a nightmare. Today, mankind has been given an opportunity again to develop and anchor peace and stability in this world. The current entente in the international scene and the positive disposition of all nations vis-à-vis the United Nations provide a valuable opportunity for our Organization to assume a more forceful role in pursuit of world peace and stability. For it is only in peace and stability that human development can progress satisfactorily. We

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are very much encouraged by the important role the United Nations has recently assumed, and would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Secretary-General for convening the Security Council summit meeting, which sought, among other things to promote greater understanding and cooperation in the world. We are in full support of the new approach to conflict resolution referred to as preventive diplomacy.

Peace and security in the world will remain elusive as long as we continue to have centres of armed conflict that risk degenerating into regional conflicts that threaten world peace and stability. The situation in Somalia, the former Yugoslavia and other trouble spots around the world constitute an important threat to world peace and stability. We will need the collective resources and determination of the United Nations and all its Member States to resolve these conflicts.

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The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina has deteriorated very seriously. The summary execution of civilian members of the non-Serbian population and the internment in concentration camps of thousands of people testify to gross human-rights abuses. The Gambia joins other nations in strongly condemning the perpetrators of these acts. We also condemn in no uncertain terms the concept of "ethnic cleansing", which in every respect is reminiscent of Nazi practices. It is totally unacceptable in this day and age to torture, kill or send into exile innocent men, women and children because of their religious beliefs. We will all be guilty if we stand by and see these atrocities being perpetrated with impunity.

We fully appreciate and commend the bold efforts of the United Nations and the European Community in their search for peace in the former Yugoslavia. We salute the courage of all those taking part in humanitarian relief missions, particularly the soldiers who risk their lives to ensure that food and other relief items reach Bosnia and Herzegovina. We strongly believe that unless the fundamental cause of the conflict is addressed, the tragedy will continue. Serbian aggression against Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina must be stopped.

We join the international community in calling on the United Nations to act firmly by implementing effectively the relevant Security Council resolutions on Yugoslavia, particularly resolution 757 (1992). The decision of the General Assembly to deny Serbia and Montenegro the seat of the former Yugoslavia, as contained in resolution 47/1 of 22 September 1992, is a step in the right direction. We believe the United Nations should not hesitate to use force to stop Serbian aggression, in conformity with the provisions of Article 42 of the United Nations Charter. In the meantime, the creation of an

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air corridor to protect relief supplies and innocent civilians from aerial bombardment would provide a useful respite in a desperate situation.

The Gambia shares the concern of the international community over the lack of progress in finding a lasting solution to the conflict in Somalia. The scale of human tragedy remains a constant reminder of the horrors and absurdities of war. We fully endorse the urgent and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 767 (1992), which calls for the cessation of hostilities, national reconciliation and unity in Somalia and the opening up of the country to humanitarian assistance.

My delegation praises the laudable efforts of the United Nations, the United States of America and relief agencies for the assistance they are providing to the starving population of Somalia. We want to appeal to all those who exercise some influence over the various warring factions to use their influence now in support of Security Council resolution 767 (1992). Without peace the humanitarian assistance will continue but so will the human tragedy.

On the question of Liberia, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) continues to grapple with the problem of effective implementation of the Yamoussoukro IV accord in order to bring about lasting peace in Liberia and to arrest the growth of destabilizing forces in the subregion. We continue to appeal to all the parties concerned, in particular the leadership of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, to adhere to the provisions of the Yamoussoukro IV accord as further elaborated at Geneva in April this year. We make a strong appeal to the United Nations and the international community to give full support to the efforts of ECOWAS to bring about peace and stability in Liberia.

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With reference to South Africa, it is disappointing to note that the euphoria and optimism that greeted the release of Nelson Mandela and other prisoners have failed to materialize into a free, democratic and non-racial South Africa. The suspension of the talks in the framework of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) and the continued acts of violence and senseless killings, as highlighted in Boipatong township in June and in Ciskei in September, call into question the commitment of the South African Government. We would like to state again that the South African Government bears a major responsibility for these acts of lawlessness. It will have to demonstrate greater responsibility in ensuring the security of all South Africans. It is time to turn this tragic page and allow discussions that will bring peace, stability and progress to South Africa. We appeal to all the parties to assist in this process.

We are following with keen interest the developments in the Middle East peace process which started in Madrid almost a year ago. We sincerely hope that the opportunity provided by that process will be taken up by all the parties to ensure that the region, which has been denied peace for so long, will ultimately enjoy a comprehensive and lasting peace on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973).

The world has yet to become the haven of peace and stability we so earnestly work for. The conflicts in Cambodia, Afghanistan and some of the recently independent republics of the former Soviet Union reflect the very difficult moments of transition. We are confident that with the full support of the international community these difficulties will be overcome.

Another danger to world stability is poverty and lack of economic development. The developing countries continue to be saddled with overriding

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debt, low commodity prices and sluggish if not stagnant economies. Nowhere is the situation more bleak and desperate as in Africa, where the cumulative debt stands at around $272 billion, the approximate equivalent of 90 per cent of the continent's gross national product. Debt-service obligations require about $25 billion annually, representing 30 per cent of the continent's export earnings. Failure to effect timely payments has led to increases in interest payments, at the rate of over $1 billion a year.

I believe those figures are an eloquent testimony to the plight of Africa today. The rest of the world must not remain insensitive to that plight. The adoption at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly of a new agenda for the development of Africa in the 1990s has helped focus attention once again on Africa's critical economic situation. We will need, however, to go beyond words. In this connection I wish to echo the Secretary-General's proposals for the cancellation of all official bilateral debts, the cancellation of other semi-official debts such as export credits, and the substantial reduction of debts owed to multilateral financial institutions, which now account for 40 per cent of sub-Saharan debt servicing.

It is regrettable to note that these proposals, considered more favourable to Africa than the Trinidad terms, have not yet received positive and widespread acceptance from Africa's development partners. Africa, like other developing regions, will require a substantial inflow of capital and technology and access to international markets if the global partnership is to have any meaning for us.

(Mr. Sey, Gambia)

The Gambia shares with the rest of Africa this very heavy financial burden, in spite of her efforts at economic recovery. In fact, the Gambia has successfully undertaken an economic recovery programme, and has since 1991 started a programme for sustained development. The main policy orientation of the programme for sustained development is the pursuit of continuous adjustment with growth, with the objective of achieving economic development in a liberalized market environment. This will allow mobilization of the resources of the private sector to provide the investment that will generate sustained economic growth and expansion. By expanding the productive capacity of the economy, we hope to be able to support a significant improvement in the living standards of Gambians.

The attainment of economic growth requires a favourable external environment. Secondly, a conducive international economic and financial environment will help resolve the international debt crisis, restore adequate capital flows and create a more open world trading system, which will result in sustained economic expansion and enhance private and public spending on human development. We fully appreciate the very valuable assistance being given by the United Nations, the international financial institutions and friendly countries. However, there is a need for continued external assistance in support of our development efforts. In this regard, we fervently hope that the donors' conference for the Gambia, to be held in Geneva on 13 and 14 October 1992, will be as successful as previous ones.

Today we are witnessing the emergence of a new world order grounded in the principles of respect for human rights, political pluralism and self-determination. This new world order, which is still unfolding, marks the end of the cold war and the beginning of a strengthened role for the United Nations.

(Mr. Sey, Gambia)

In Africa, marching side by side with the economic problems has been the desire for greater democratization and liberalization of political attitudes, systems and dogmas. In the face of this new socio-political revolution, the Gambia has consistently maintained its practice of the rule of law, and adherence to parliamentary democracy, as exemplified by its successful and regular conduct of free and fair elections since the attainment of independence in 1965.

Under the wise and distinguished leadership of Alhaji Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara, the Gambia continues to advocate the promotion of, and adherence to human rights practices all over the world. The Gambia therefore welcomes the holding of the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993. That Conference will not only afford all peace-loving people, nations and institutions the opportunity to express their concern on human rights issues, but will also serve as a means for the objective evaluation of the world's human rights records and practices and an opportunity for us to rededicate ourselves to the achievement of higher standards of human rights practices throughout the world.

In full recognition of the universal application of human rights and democracy, my delegation is pleased to note the implementation of General Assembly resolution 45/164, which proclaimed 1993 the International Year for the World's Indigenous People. This proclamation will further strengthen international cooperation in seeking solutions to the problems confronting indigenous communities in the areas of human rights, the environment, development, education, and health, and we regard it as a first step towards mobilizing greater international support and assistance for the self-development of indigenous peoples and their communities.

(Mr. Sey, Gambia)

The United Nations is particularly well placed to focus attention on major issues of concern to humankind. Of special interest to us today is the welfare of children, which was brought to the forefront by the World Summit for Children. The Gambia pledges to continue to formulate plans, programmes and laws to safeguard the rights and interests of children and women, who, effectively, constitute the most important and productive category of our population.

The Government of the Gambia fully supports the convening of the forthcoming international conference on assistance to African children, scheduled to take place in Dakar, Senegal from 25 to 27 November 1992. We strongly urge the international community to lend support to that conference. Mobilizing African and international support for the global goals for children in the 1990s is one of the biggest challenges we now face as a world community. Together we can make the conference a significant step in the process towards achieving the goals of the World Summit.

Another major issue of global concern today is the question of AIDS and HIV infections, which, in the last few years, have grown into a global pandemic with no effective cure as yet. It has been estimated that, by the end of this century, 40 million people will have been affected by the virus and more than 10 million children will have become orphans. This is indeed a gloomy prediction. The situation therefore calls for greater and more sustained efforts in combating the AIDS pandemic. It calls for collective global responsibility based on learning from, sharing with, and giving assistance to each other.

My delegation realizes that the United Nations will be increasingly called upon to undertake many more responsibilities in a world that is rapidly

(Mr. Sey, Gambia)

changing. If it is to succeed in handling the growing complexities of today, then it must be adequately structured to respond to the emerging challenges.

The Gambia has followed with keen interest the deliberations of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in July 1992, and the efforts to restructure the Council. Indeed, these efforts are part of the larger and wider process of restructuring the United Nations system initiated by the Secretary-General.

The Gambia welcomes the creation of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs under the dynamic leadership of Jan Eliasson as Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator. The creation of this Department is not only timely but crucial, given its role of providing relief and solace to the millions of needy people all over the world, especially in areas suffering from armed conflict, poverty, population pressures, environmental degradation and human rights violations, in keeping with the provisions and spirit of General Assembly resolution 46/182.

It is also gratifying to note that some of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development on the establishment of a Commission for Sustainable Development and issues relating to the global environment facility were considered and approved by the Economic and Social Council. The addition of the high-level-segment debate in the plenary session of the Council and the dialogue between participants that accompanied it is also welcome.

(Mr. Sey, Gambia)

We in Africa continue to support General Assembly resolution 32/197, which calls for structural, administrative and financial reforms of the United Nations system, particularly the strengthening of policy-making at the level of the General Assembly in the economic, social and other related fields. As we begin the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, our minds are still fresh with some of the relevant and important recommendations of the Economic and Social Council on the economic and social issues which affect the world and demand urgent attention.

We are at an exciting junction of history. The positive changes we have witnessed in global political and economic trends are a clear manifestation of mankind's desire for a progressive world and a better future. However, the goals of global peace, security and progress will continue to elude us if poverty, human rights violations and economic disparity, which are at the root of many conflicts, continue to characterize our world. The United Nations has a special role to play in combatting these evils. The Gambia remains fully committed to joining hands with all nations to support the United Nations in its crusade for a happier, more stable and prosperous world.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): We have heard the last speaker in the general debate at this meeting.

A representative has asked to exercise his right of reply. I should like to remind Members that in conformity with the decision 34/41 of the General Assembly, statements made in the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first statement and 5 minutes for the second statement, and that delegations should speak from their seats.

I now call on the representative of Iraq.

Mr. MALIK (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): I ask your indulgence and that of the delegates for taking the floor at this late hour.

The statement of the Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia regarding Iraq can be described only as false claims and distortions of facts and realities. The Minister's aim was to camouflage the role his regime played in preparing for the aggression against Iraq. Moreover, the delegation of Iraq was not at all surprised that the Minister took lightly the question of sovereignty, after his own regime has surrendered its sovereignty to those States in order to launch that aggression against Iraq. That regime continues to allow American and NATO planes to fly from its bases in order to violate the sovereignty of Iraq.

The Iraqis will not surrender their sovereignty, independence or territorial integrity as the others have done. The dignity of the Iraqis stands above defilement by a foreign aggressor. History will bear witness to that fact.

I must say that Iraq accepted Security Council resolutions and fulfilled the major portion of its obligations under those resolutions. Every fair-minded observer knows that this is a fact. This will continue to be our approach. The time has come for the Security Council to fulfil its obligations towards Iraq and its people under the same resolutions.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now call on the representative of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. ALLAGANY (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): What was mentioned by my Foreign Minister this evening was no more than statement of facts that are known to be facts by the international community as a whole. I should like to refer to passages from this speech on Iraq. The Foreign Minister started by saying that the United Nations has clearly demonstrated

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its ability to discharge its role when it faced up firmly in the Gulf region to the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait. Where is the false claim in that? He then went on to say that this stand has left the imprint of its image in our minds, and that we should express our gratitude for and appreciation of that stand. Where is the false claim in such a remark? The Minister subsequently mentioned the Iraqi regime's recent return to the pattern of false claims and threats against Kuwait, and referred to that regime's failure to abide by international rules. Is this also a false claim? Iraq has refused to return over 2,000 prisoners of war from Kuwait and other countries; Iraq has refused to sell the quantity of oil allowed by the Security Council in order to save the Iraqi people from famine - all that in order to avoid paying certain compensations to the countries affected by the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. There is also the war of extermination by poison gas against the Iraqi people to the North and the same to the south of Iraq. There is also a lack of cooperation with the United Nations and refusal to reveal the locations of chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. This has obliged the Security Council to meet several times and to serve notice on the Iraqi regime to cooperate. There is also a repetition of the claims which brought destruction to the region in general and to Iraq in particular, namely that Kuwait is the nineteenth province of Iraq.

These acts prove to tne whole world that the Iraqi regime's behaviour in the region contravenes all international norms, especially now when the world stands at the threshold of a new era which rejects the use of force or threat of the use of force and emphasizes a need to resort to peaceful means in the settlement of international disputes. What has been done by the States of the

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region in order to defend themselves is a legitimate right called for by the Charter of this Organization, under which we meet, and the Iraqi regime must understand that.

The meeting rose at 7.55 p.m.